A WAYFARER IN FRENCH VINEYARDS

BY E. I. ROBSON

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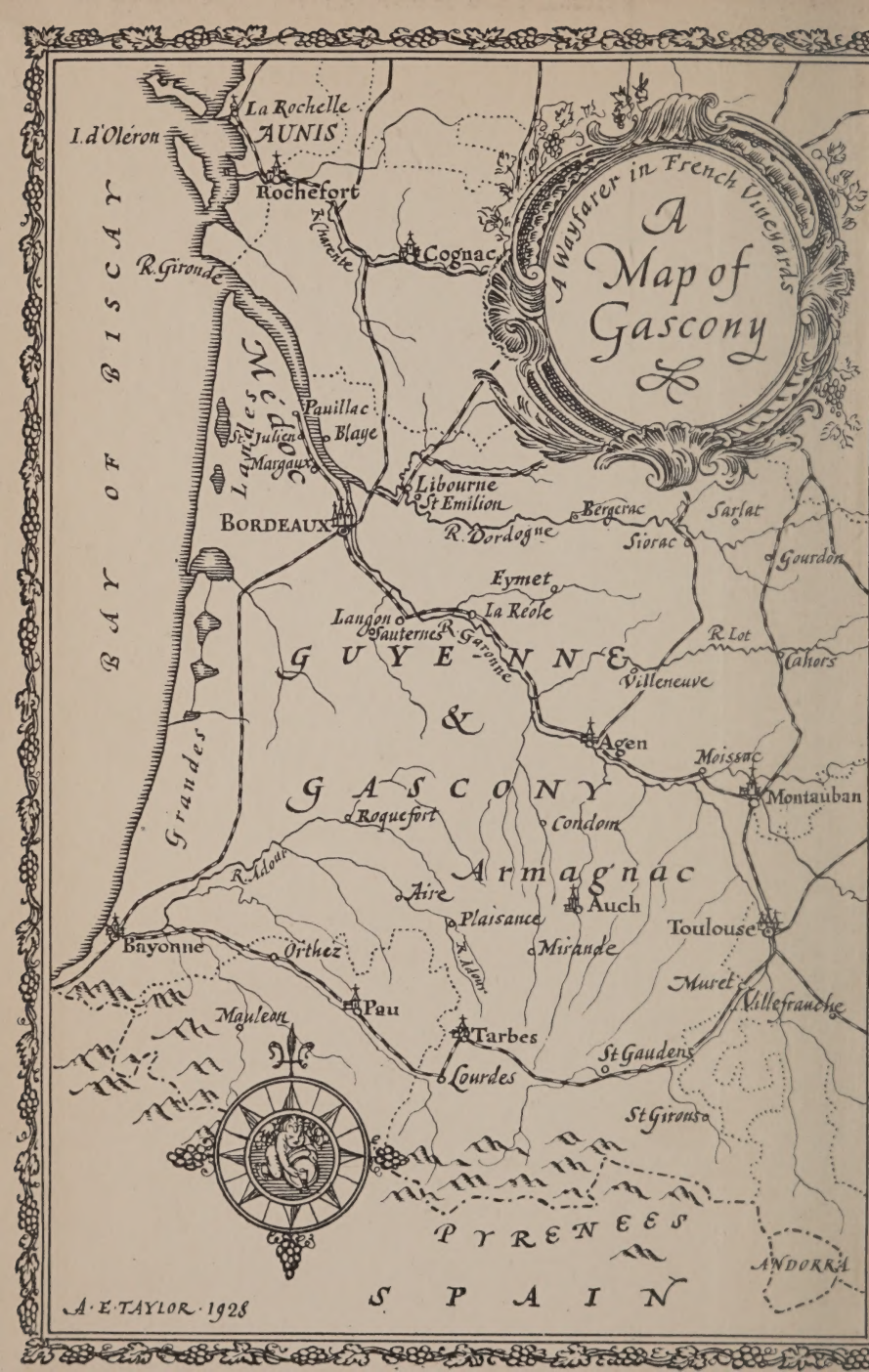
In this latest volume of the famous Wayfarer Series, Mr. Robson writes of those delightful parts of France in which the vines flourish: the Bordeaux district, the Médoc, the Dordogne, the Garonne, the Upper and Lower Burgundy districts, the Côte d'Or, the Loire country, Touraine and Anjou, the Charentes (where is Cognac), Armagnac, the Rhône Valley, parts of the Côte d'Azur, the Côte Vermeille, Roussillon, and the lesser vine-growing districts of Rhine, Moselle, and elsewhere.

In any of these districts tours can be made on the lines of the book. The history of each neighborhood, its art and architecture, and the life of its people, are dealt with, together with wine-making, classifications of wines, and the 'points' of good wines.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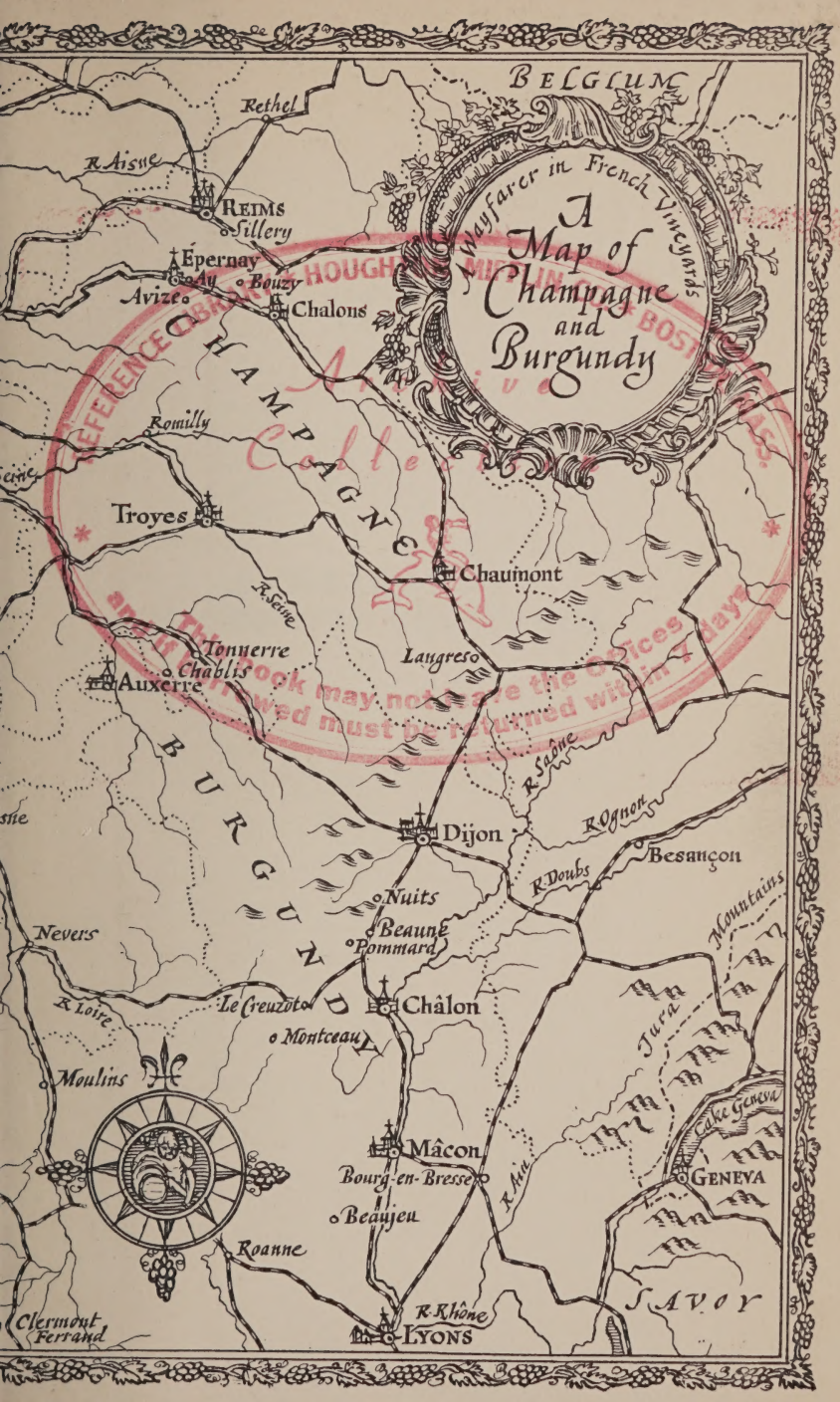
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A WAYFARER IN FRENCH VINEYARDS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR AND ARTIST

A WAYFARER IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA
A WAYFARER ON THE LOIRE
A WAYFARER IN PROVENCE
A WAYFARER ON THE SEINE

TONNERRE

A WAYFARER
IN
FRENCH VINEYARDS

BY

E. I. ROBSON

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS BY

J. R. E. HOWARD

AND A MAP

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PREFACE

ON packets which arrive from the Publishers is a label inscribed "Books, to be kept dry". So far I have been happily able to comply, but this book is manifestly a "wet" one. Yet, far from desiring to make its readers wet, or wetter, it should tend rather to emphasize the reflections often made by travellers, that where the vine is there is sobriety; and that such want of sobriety as exists in vineyard countries too often comes from deserting wine for spirits, some of which, indeed, ultimately come from the vine, and some do not. This book is really a vine-book, not a wine-book. To write a wine-book, one must learn thoroughly vintners' phraseology, which I have never compassed, save that when I know a wine and afterwards read the conventional description, I feel that it is just what I would have said myself. The chief value of vintners' phraseology has always

seemed to me its help in classifying one's neighbours and acquaintances. Be that as it may, this book is topographical rather than œnological, though as other writers on wines have referred to the country, I, writing of the country, have not ignored the wines. Nay, I have even ventured on certain rash judgements upon them. But the fact is that vines have a way of growing in very pleasant places, often in very historical places ; and I cannot help it, moreover, if the history of the vine is often much more dignified than the history of, let us say, democracy.

I should like to have included other countries than France ; I have seen vineyards in Germany, Spain, Italy, Portugal, and in some of our dominions across the seas. But Mr. Hedges Butler, an expert, has anticipated me ; and while I gratefully acknowledge the help of his book, I cannot, and could not, aspire to the ample pinions which bore him from country to country.[1] I have had to travel on land, save when driving most furiously

[1] Mr. Butler travelled partly by air: flew, in fact, from vineyard to vineyard.

in French motors which only touch earth at each kilometre stone. And yet even that was pleasant, or pleasant in the recollection; and no doubt the bumps, if unfrequent, did one good.

I should here like to thank many kind people who showed me over vineyards and cellars and (in Burgundy) humble little sheds and outhouses, and compelled me to taste various delicious vintages, of which my only complaint is that these tastings, which should have lasted over a cycle of Cathay, were too often crowded into one glorious hour.

While this work will have failed of its purpose if it does not encourage tourists to taste of the produce of various vineyards wisely, rather than too well, it may be worth recording how in my own travels I was pursued by nomenclature of a certain type.

At Beaune my hotel was in the Faubourg of Bouze, and near to it is the Parc de Bouze, named from the stream of that name.

Not far off the Moselle, where I was searching out some rather derelict vineyards, lies

Bouzey; the landlord of my hotel at Épernay was M. Bouzereau, and elsewhere I have remarked on the excellent still red wines of Bouzy, a well-known Champagne centre. My knowledge of French place-names does not enable me to say what is the meaning of the underlying root or stem; but the Beaune stream-name suggests at least that it has something to do with water.

E. I. R.

March, 1928.

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" Point de bière, mon fi, point de ces saletés d'inventions qui vous mettent du feu dans l'estomac et le cuisant à la gorge, mais du bon vin de la vigne. Ça rafraîchit le sang des jeunes, et ça donne de la force aux vieux. Ça vaut mieux qu'un coup de pied dans le derrière."

ÉMILE MOSELLY : *Jean des Brebis*

A WAYFARER IN FRENCH VINEYARDS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THAT wine makes for sobriety is the general experience of wine-drinking countries. When you see people drunk abroad it is generally from the drinking of spirits and not of wine. Drunkenness is indeed to be found, though in a reasonably long experience in Italy in the war I only saw two Italian soldiers drunk. In French towns you can find café-haunters as you find bar-loungers in our country; and in certain parts of France, particularly, it is said, among the fishing communities—and of them, those on the western islands are singled out for special mention—you find a good deal of drunkenness from drinking not very good spirits, possibly based on wood-alcohol. Doctors and others say that beer and spirits are necessary in humid atmospheres; but anyhow the contrast between wine-drinking countries and the rest is sufficiently obvious to need no further labouring.

The evils of drinking in our own country come partly, no doubt, from humidity (it seems odd that this should make us thirsty), and largely, I suppose, from drinking on an empty stomach. Frenchmen drink their *apéritifs* on empty stomachs, but not usually wine, without something to eat along with it, and to develop the taste. Now the purpose of wine-drinking is, or should be, a double one: first, to quench thirst (where often enough the water-supply is at least doubtful); and, secondly, to enjoy the savour of a delicate taste. The Frenchman does not drink, so far as I have observed him, in order to feel exhilarated. He stops short of that. With us, wine being a luxury, people like to feel they are having their money's worth, or their friends' money's worth. Besides this, as things are, wines, in order to travel and keep, have to contain or to receive a certain element of strength. It is very difficult to obtain here the simple and inexpensive wines which one can find so easily abroad. For instance, an *ordinaire* drunk within a few kilometres of Sauternes was as delicate and pleasing a wine as I ever hope to taste; either such wines will not travel or are not worth the merchants' importing. People in England have an odd notion, moreover, that all wines will keep and improve almost infinitely; and a merchant does not like to risk selling a wine which within a year or two will not be at its best. An obvious solution seems to be the sale of simple and light wines marked

with their date of origin and their probable date of maturity. But even this might involve risk of loss to the importer. So we must go on as we are, and the moderate drinker who cannot afford expensive wines and does not drink spirits must stick to the nearest approach we have to a wine of the country, which is the better class of cider and perry. Those who are in touch with good wine merchants may find the right thing (I speak of wine for regular drinking), but it seems sad that so wholesome and harmless a drink as simple wines are, cannot be encouraged by considerable duty reduction and made more possible by some such system of dating as has been suggested above. Meanwhile we can always get really good wines by paying for them; and as will appear many times in this book, wines from a good merchant will be what they profess to be. If we now hark back to the double purpose of wine-drinking, it seems obvious that the wine, even if it be a simple and inexpensive one, if it is worth drinking at all, should be given every chance. That means no *apéritifs*; the cocktail habit, for example, is a most wicked one; harmful, at odd times, and a positive insult to good wines at a meal following; no cigarettes just before eating (to smoke while eating is an insult to the cook as well as the butler); no violent tastes or savours, no curry nor piquant sauces, during the meal; coffee some time after the end of the meal, and no strong-flavoured liqueurs (like mint and others) to

dominate and crush what lingers on the palate of the delicate wine-taste. The habit of a real Cognac or a good Armagnac is not so harmful; for they really are, when genuine, a quintessence of wine flavour; the Armagnac, unless I err, more delicate than Cognac. But this will all come in later on. Our main point is the healthiness and wholesomeness of wine-drinking, when simple and light wines may be had for the mere thirst-quenching, and delicious though more costly wines to be drunk in less quantity to finish up. To get this idea established in our own country would be difficult, both because of the duties and because only an intelligent host would set less expensive wines before his guest, even at earlier stages. There is much sad snobbery about wines, and restaurant-keepers are naturally not slow to encourage it.

Let this, then, stand in favour of the grape—that rightly used it makes for health and sobriety.

"The Vine in Ancient Mythology" is the subject of a note in Dierbach's learned and delightful *Flora Mythologica*. I give this note more or less as it stands in the original. In less civilized stages man is content with such drinks as come handiest, which Nature offers him: water, or the milk from his cattle; but civilization as it progresses creates needs and desires which can be satisfied only with much labour and toil As Demeter won for

herself divine honours by her introduction of agriculture, so honours came to Dionysus, for that he, as all the old myths say, was the first to press the juice from the grapes, and taught men to cultivate the grape, and by planting of the stocks to reduce the "gadding vine" to orderliness.

Ampelus (the vine trunk) was called a Companion of Bacchus, and described as a satyr. Another story is that Dionysus was in love with the nymph Staphyle, and that she was changed into a vine. The old myth of Dionysus, as an infant, being nursed to maturity in the thigh of Zeus seems to be a nature-parable of the growth of the vine or the maturing of its juice. Jupiter crowned his cupbearer, Ganymede, with vine leaves and grapes; and even the fauns and, naturally enough, Silenus wear garlands of vine leaves. The vine was sacred to Rhea, or Cybele, as goddess of temperance. There are pictures of Graces with vine-crowns, suggesting, no doubt, youth and jollity. One of the Hours, Orthosia, was goddess of the growth of the vine. Damaskus was the evil person who pushed up the vines which Dionysus had planted; he was flayed, and his skin used to keep wine in. Usually wine-skins were those of oxen; and Dionysus is represented sometimes with horns. That the vine is wholesome and curative we see from the Roman goddess, Meditrina, sister of Hygeia or Health. A vintage festival was the

Oschophoria, or bearing of vine-tendrils, with their grapes.

In dealing with literary interpretations, context is everything. In dealing with vines, soil is everything. Climate counts; the vine's family counts. But soil dominates. That is why you cannot extend the Sauternes district, the Douro district, the Romanée-Conti's meagre hectares, by a margin of a dozen yards. Take a well-known vine; let it be planted in its own climate (and that, within a little, can be found). But unless you have the same soil—and you have not—you will not get the same result, not (to use a slang, but apt, expression) by a long chalk. But take different vines, which are used to a similar climate; plant them in the same soil, their results will be like, if not completely alike. A very important result follows; grafted French vines on imported phylloxera-proof vine-stocks produce the French variety arising naturally from its particular soil.

A word upon phylloxera; the culprit is an insect, which attacks both roots and leaves. It seems that there is no real safeguard, or remedy, save destruction. Total immersion, as practised in some countries (I remember a feeling of surprise on seeing submerged vineyards near Arles), will help; and salty, marshy soils seem to be proof, or nearly so. As for mildew, sulphate helps. No one should ever eat an unwashed grape in any wine country.

As for wine diseases, they are many, and most of them, if watched, can be coped with.

Recent steps in the safeguarding of wines and wine nomenclatures have been taken by France and other countries. On the Champagne question, an attempt was made in the French Chamber, in June 1927, to allow such communes of the Côte d'Or which produced "Champagne" wines to use the title "Champagne". This was successfully combated by the Marne and Aube districts; and no Burgundy white wine can be sold as Champagne. This is a good thing; the Burgundy whites can hold their own without borrowing a title from outside. It was also decided (at an earlier session) that "champagnized wines" may bear the title "Méthode Champenoise". This at least tells the buyer how the wine has been treated. An International Bureau of Wine is now busy arranging about marks of origin, which will guarantee purity and genuineness of wines from the vineyard to the consumer. This step, with others, will, it is hoped, greatly assist the wine industry in Europe.

Co-operation is a blessed word, but it does not mean much to us yet. It somehow suggests the trade combine, from which it differs largely. But, rightly understood, it means the saving and safe-keeping of many industries which otherwise languish and perhaps fail. There are certain

special features about the wine industry co-operative movement in Burgundy which are capable of extension, and otherwise interesting.[1]

Burgundy is a country of smallholdings. Fourteen thousand vine-growers till no more than one hectare apiece; and many even less. Hence have always arisen great difficulties of management, which are being met, and have partly been met, by co-operative cellars, working areas of ten to seventy hectares, all owned by smallholders, and all producing the best type of Côte d'Or wines. There is a small common capital; the implements are humble and almost primitive (for so Burgundians prefer), and many of these are lent or hired out at small rents. But later, the society purchases new material and more efficient machinery; as also the big casks, which must be new for each vintage. Only *pinot* growers are admitted. For the Gamay—no co-operative society; no loans, no efficient machinery—*à bas le Gamay!*

The date of the vintages is fixed by a committee, so that the order of treatment is settled beforehand. The members of the society do the actual work in a fixed rota. Each year requires special treatment; Beaune gives the necessary directions. Sales are held in common, and profits distributed *pro rata* at intervals. Those in need of ready money may borrow on terms. The *marc* is distilled,

[1] I make use of an article in the *Journal d'Agriculture Pratique*, May 21, 1927.

and the profits from this may form the reserve fund. This is only a partial account of these co-operative societies; but it will be seen how the system should tend to assist the small grower and keep up the quality of so reputed a wine district.

Nineteen hundred and twenty-six was a bad vineyard year—in fact a bad year for most outdoor growth. The vintage showed a fall of twenty-two million hectolitres from 1925. No wonder France has to import so much wine from Algeria, which showed itself a fall of four millions, and also from Greece. The correct thing would be for France to tighten her belt, or at least narrow her gullet; but modern France does not do this; and all 1926 should have descended the gullet, at normal rate, by the end of July 1927; something of earlier years, however, seemed still to linger in Burgundy during August. Despite a dry America, nearly thirty-five million bottles of Champagne were exported between January and November 1926; at that rate, 1927 must have gone very short, and 1928 should go shorter. Still, 1926 will probably be a *grande année* in quality. Yquem was able to sell at seventy-five thousand francs the tonneau; and great Médoc houses at forty thousand; Burgundy at ten thousand a *pièce*; the Hospice sale at Beaune reached a record total of a million three hundred thousand and odd francs; and the plain fact seems to be

that for French wines for some little time to come none but the moneyed need apply.[1]

This year, 1927, has been a disastrous year among the vines. There was early hail, especially in Moselle districts; the constant rain brought mildew, and much expenditure in sulphur has been necessary, while the more generous wines seldom can be produced from mildewed grapes. The Corton vineyard was very badly damaged by unusual rain; and others suffered. Apart from mildew, June rain and hailstorms, coming on top of a succession of disasters, put some of the Épernay district vineyards right out of action, especially at Cumières.

And as if that were not enough, there have been strikes among the vintagers in Aude and Hérault. So what are the poor wine-growers to do?

To make quite clear the process of red-wine making, I here capitulate briefly the processes. First, a preliminary crushing of the grapes, denuded of stalks; then the first fermentation or *cuvage*; then *foulage*, crushing, more or less complete, by treading, or by cylinders, or (rarely) by "dollys", such as used to be used, perhaps still are, by washerwomen in their "poss-tubs"; then a second fermentation; after this the *mère-goutte*, or first

[1] Figures from *Comptes Rendues de l'Académie d'Agriculture de France*, 1927, No. 1.

wine, is ready, and is pumped into barrels; then, finally, comes the pressing of all that remains still unpressed. This process is modified and varied according to convenience of cellarage and of appliances. But the main point is that the popular notion of grapes freshly brought in being trodden there and then is in error; and that the pressing is the last of the processes. For white wines the juice is not allowed contact with the skins and debris longer than absolutely necessary.

I give now a few French terms used by vintners which may puzzle English travellers. Other such terms can easily be had from French handbooks.

Charnu and *corsé* (i.e. *qui a du corps*) are not quite the same. Both imply what we call "body", but a *vin corsé* will be more alcoholic than a *vin charnu*. *Maché* is *corsé*, but a little more so.

Clairet and similar words are troublesome. There is *clairet*, adjective, perhaps from low Latin *claratum*, meaning "of a light ruby colour". It is used as a noun, but seldom as we use "claret". *Clairette* is a white grape, and the wine which comes from it (usually in the south; Limoux has a *clairette*, the same, apparently, as its *blanquette*). This *clairette* is usually slightly sparkling. Die (Drôme) is famous for its *clairette* or *muscat* (sparkling).

Cru really is the ground where vines grow. So it comes to denote the origin, pedigree, of the vine. So, too, *cuvée* comes to mean the total output of a vineyard in its various degrees of excellence.

Finir, of a wine, does not mean "to go down the consumer's throat", but to "finish up" well—that is, to improve with age, to be a good *vin de garde*.

Fumeux does not refer to colour, but is used of a volatile wine which goes, or seems to go, rapidly to one's head.

Moelleux implies some "body", but also a certain sweetness.

Nerveux, oddly enough, means a wine which does not mind crossing the Channel, and will be no worse for it.

Vert is used rather like the Portuguese *verde* for a young wine, still rather tart. It is well for travellers to remember that *ordinaires* are usually young, and they must expect a certain tartness. Water will tone this slightly.

Vineux implies that the wine unites several good qualities which should attach to wines.

Measures of space and of wine:

The *hectare* is 2·47 of an English acre. It is the commonest measurement, being 100 ares, or 10,000 square metres. The *journal*, often used by wine-growers in conversation, is about 35 ares; the *ouvrée* is about 4 *ares*.

A *tonneau* should be about 230 litres; it is also called a *muid* or *poinçon*. Two tonneaux make a *queue*. A *quartant* is about 60 litres. A Dijon pint is 1½ litres; and a *chopine* (this is a fairly universal measure, but they do not understand the word everywhere) is just about right on a hot and thirsty day.

CHAPTER II

CHAMPAGNE

EVERY schoolboy knows, or certainly ought to know, that Reims both had a jackdaw, and was and is the great centre of the Champagne district. "La Champagne" is merely "The Country", but we must now italicize this *The*, since of wine countries it is almost the only one which counts. Whatever may be said about blended wines, especially such as are blended to meet an artificial taste of a people inexperienced in wines, it remains that the sparkling wines of this celebrated district represent the last word in the proper interaction of Nature and Art. The only irritating thing about Champagne wine is that it has become the "correct thing" of melodrama, the "correct thing" for the young lady at the restaurant to demand from the young man who is dining her. But this does not necessarily make it any worse. In fact, nothing can make it any worse if it bears the mark of a well-known house. It is bound to be good and bound to be expensive, since the culture of the vine itself is most precise and costly, and the "processes" (all proper and healthy) are

very costly too. The sad thing is that having become " conventional " it is too constantly poured, if not " before swine ", at least before those who know nothing about it and do not really appreciate it. After visiting this country, this martyred country, I rejoice, none the less, when I see the gilded rich, or the " would-like-to-seem-rich ", expending great sums upon this wine; only I regret that so much of his payment goes to the restaurant or the hotel-keeper (who may be some foreign syndicate) and not all of it to the brave people who grow it, and who guarded, tended (even under fire), and miraculously restored the great vineyards.

I remember while quite a little boy being taken by an excellent uncle to one of our most " exclusive " clubs. Wine was proposed, after an admirable though simple lunch; discussion resulted; " the boy shall choose " was the verdict. Rather nonplussed, I murmured, like " Le membre du jockey " in *Tartarin sur les Alpes*, " Tchimpègne ", when the senior member of the party turned to me and said rather pityingly: " Quite right, young man; quite right in one way; but you don't know that they have in this club the finest Claret in England. You can get good Champagnes by asking for the right brand; you'll never get this Claret elsewhere, and not here for long, for all the gold in Ophir." The Claret came, with a procession of waiters, softly dandled by a Prime Minister among waiters;

I have never forgotten my modest taste of it. The obvious words "silky" or "velvet", which one sees in catalogues, do not represent the real thing by a long way.

The moral of all this is that Champagne is not the only wine in France; not always or necessarily the best; but it can always be relied on, if carefully chosen, as true to type, and its best is very best.

All Champagne, that is the Champagne district, is divided into three parts. There is the north to south strip, at right angles to the Marne, and stretching well south of it, with a few odd little outlying patches; here grow the white grapes, though dark grapes show here and there.

Then come the Marne slopes, stretching some distance on the north bank, but also a little east of Épernay to well beyond Boursault on the south bank.

Then, with a big outlying patch north of Ambonnay, comes the "Reims Mountain", two irregular S-shaped ridges, the westernmost being the "Little Reims Mountain". There are still more northern patches, extending even north of Reims, and how good grapes grow so far north is rather a puzzle, but they do.

Not all the grapes of Champagne are "champagnized". There are red still wines of great excellence, among which I mention *honoris causa*

Bouzy. It is one of the sorrows of the Champagne district that you do not hear so much of the places, but chiefly of the firms; that is natural and proper, as will presently appear; but the wine merchant who will import and popularize Bouzy will make a fortune.[1] Everything is in a name. Something might also be done with Dizy, with a trifle of manipulation; but it may be well to note that neither resultant adjective will characterize the inhabitants of these places or, indeed, of any wine district. The presence of good wine makes for a decent and healthy moderation in wine-drinking, and if you see any one either the one thing or the other you may usually put it down to *alcoolisme*. Bouzy and Dizy, however, cannot spend many of their grapes on still wine, since both are in important "Champagne" districts.

Let it be said at once that Reims is not really the centre, except of the trade, of the district. Épernay is the natural centre, or a place near it to which I desire to retire some day. It has been my ambition to live at a place of the shortest possible name. True, letters are delivered to me with merely my name and county on the envelope (what cannot our Post Office do?), but Ay would realize my ambition if I had not to add "Marne". Moreover, one thinks how many jokes one might make with Scottish friends: "And whaur d' ye

[1] This remains true, even though no one can largely import this wine, which is nearly all used on the spot.

live?" "Ay." "Ay?" "Ay, Ay!" (And so on almost *ad infinitum*.)

But to return; Épernay is the true centre, and all the best Champagnes are blended of something of each of the three parts of the vineyard country. Though white grapes are used, Champagne is chiefly made from dark grapes, time not being allowed for the colouring cells to give off their colour. Originally the best wines of the district were red and still, like Bouzy; but an epoch-making discovery of a Benedictine not only turned it to gold, but made it sparkle also. The grape of the best wines is the Pinot.

Let it be said at once that this most interesting country, now made doubly, if pathetically, interesting from being a great battle-ground in the Great War (it literally seemed as if the war were solely for possession of Reims and Épernay), nevertheless has its pleasing aspects and its monuments, of which one, the cathedral of Reims, probably attracts now more tourists than any one building in the world. The views are pleasing — river valleys always have their attractions—and the cultivation of the vine and its vintage are worth much study. Moreover, near the vine centres are places of especial interest: Troyes is still in Champagne, if a good way south; Châlons-sur-Marne is very well worth visiting; Soissons, west of Reims, is a place for those to visit who like "a good cry"—it seems more lamentable, somehow,

than Reims itself—were it not for the splendid industry with which it is being rebuilt. North-east of Reims is the department of Ardennes, with Givet, on the Meuse; north of the Aisne river is Laon, with a remarkable cathedral and a good deal else of great interest; and Verdun lies at the east of Champagne, to which many tourists will naturally trend. Roads are good and easy for motoring, and from Reims one can get about by many autocar tours. At Verzenay and Verzy, great "leading" centres, on the "Mountain", are items of interest; near Verzenay is "Napoleon's" mill, which played a part in the late war also; at Verzy the botanist can see some unusual trees (a sort of "Ygdrasil Ash", but actually twisted beeches).

Then Mareuil has a Romanesque church; there are excellent views at Rilly (where is one of the best bins); there is architecture at Ste-Menehould; Ay has an ancient church.

Of the larger centres, Épernay is not of striking beauty, though its situation is pleasant, and in default of scenery on the surface one may reflect on the gold in the cellars. It is an ancient city as far as history goes, and was just far enough from Paris to receive the chief buffets of invaders and to suffer repeated famine. The Marne valley all along is worth seeing; and there are forests here and there, and chiefly about Épernay and Reims.

LA PORTE DE MARS, REIMS

As for Reims itself, who shall describe it, as it now is? Lying as it does off the Marne, in its own plain, it none the less is surrounded with pleasant hillsides, or hillsides recovering gradually—and in part already having recovered—their old charm. The vines at any rate are there again; replanted, as they were, as fast as ever the hills became available; so that on any of the customary Reims excursions one will see every sign of desolation on the one hand and a smiling and rich country-side on the other.

It is not right to rush into Reims, view the battered cathedral, and rush out again. Apart from the cathedral there are other wonders, also (for the most part) sadly battered, and in process of determined reconstruction. The church of St-Rémy is of very great antiquity, and a very fine example too. There is another ancient church—St-Jacques; the famous Roman gate; and a Town Hall, blown into "the middle of next week".

In the Cathedral, it seems a question whether complete restoration is wise. Structural repairs, indeed, were necessary, unavoidable, and clearly also right and proper; but the restoration of battered arches and statues, where not in any way assisting the stability of the building, seems more doubtful; they would have worn their war-scars nobly, as they have long worn their weather-scars, and to leave them as they were would not so much have been a parading of wanton damage by a disappointed

enemy as a marking for future ages of a period of history, lamentable enough, through which the battered glories of Reims yet emerged. Then a full set of casts of the statues and ornamentations as they were might have been housed near by for the curious.

Whether in height, massiveness, dignity of the buttresses, beauty of the North Porch, splendour (as it once was) of façade, majesty of interior, Reims was always one of the great cathedrals of the world. Its towers seem a little inadequate, perhaps, and have, of course, been rendered rather more inadequate by bombarding.

As it is important to know what is best and what is next best, I add a note on the classification of the vineyards, although, as said before, one rather tends to lose the territorial link when in the region of blends.

The three red vineyard centres on the so-called "Mountain" (a chalk elevation, with a rather flat surface, and wooded on the top; by going into quarries one can see how near the chalk comes to the top soil; very near indeed, where I was able to observe it), northward and slightly east, are Verzy, Verzenay, Mailly, and Sillery; more east, Bouzy, Ambonnay, Trépail; south (on the Marne's right bank), Ay, Mareuil, Dizy, Hautvillers. These are almost all black Pinot vineyards. Of all this Épernay is the best natural centre, but Reims rather

absorbs the traffic. The so-called " White Slopes " are mostly planted with Chardonnay—but there are whites in the three red centres—and the black Pinot is found at Vertus in the extreme south. The blending of these different vineyard centres arises from their possession of different characteristics. The Verzy group matures late ; the Bouzy group looks east, and has " body " ; the Ay section is the richest in alcohol. The Côte-des-Blancs has a lighter nature, and the blend of the four just rounds off everything nicely. The Côte chief *crus* are Cramant, Avize, Saran. Though Vertus, or at least Bergères, is the true southward limit, the vineyards only end southward in the Marais de St. Goug. That Ay was an ancient centre seems likely from the presence of Henry IV's Vineyard Lodge, now belonging to the Duminy firm, a fine old wood-covered house. Francis I had such a Lodge at Charlefontaine—alas, *ça n'existe plus !*

Only a small number of Champagne firms are known to English imbibers, and these mostly from Reims and Épernay. Let me then signalize from Avize, Giesler ; from Ay, Ayala, Duminy ; from Mareuil, Billecart, Miller, Charpentier ; from Rilly, Massé. My experience is that they will all too kindly welcome genuine visitors.

A *vin brut* is pretty well the wine as nature produces it, thanks to the process of fermentation. It can reasonably be drunk throughout a repast. The *demi-sec* or *doux* Champagne is a dessert wine. A

good vintage must have had at least a hundred days of good sunshine.

Champagne is a most sensitive wine, even in its own cellars, and does not stand travel well, though it travels everywhere.

The best way to see the Champagne country (as, indeed, most other countries) is to tramp it. It is not exciting country; but it is quite pleasing, in a rather monotonous sort of way, especially over the mountain, which undulates attractively. Such a walk (among others) I took from Rilly-le-Montagne to Sillery, going through vineyard after vineyard, each with its little tombstone to say to whom it belongs. Though the Côte-des-Blancs, south of Épernay, growing almost entirely white Pinots Chardonnay, rightly retains its name, there are white grapes grown north of Épernay also. By a little detour, which I did not make, one may take in Verzy and Verzenay. You can lunch at Rilly, where the choice lies between two humble restaurants, one attached to a sausage-shop, the other to the village grocer's. I chose, being hungry, the sausage-shop, but the lady of the sausages was off to visit a friend, and courteously recommended me to the rival establishment, where they gave me a homely but well cooked lunch and a pleasant pink wine. The little villages on the way are pleasant but not in any way remarkable. Chigny-les-Roses (not, as one might have expected, Chigny-les-Rosés) has a good château; and is rightly proud of its

Croix de Guerre. There is a rather dull and vineless bit just before Sillery, which has an odd-looking and ancient church. There one can, if fortunate, pick up a train for Reims. In the Marne valley, west of Ay, are dark grapes. Hautvillers, the *fons et origo* of modern Champagne, lies north by west of Épernay.

The first pressing (*foulage*) of Champagne grapes must be very cautious and gentle; the pulps and skins must be removed as soon as possible. Only the juice of this first pressing is used for Champagne. The blending is done after the first fermentation, when the juice is clear, and the bottling must be in spring. The sediment is blown off by the gas within, and it is then that the bottles receive their second cork. Champagne glasses were originally (in all probability) convolvulus shape; but Dom Pérignon, in Chavaillaud's statue, carries a shallow glass of the more usual shape. The cooling of Champagne should be such as to leave only the slightest mistiness on the outside of the glass.

The discoverer of "champagnization" demands more than a mere note.[1] He was a Benedictine monk, and generally the activity of the monks in the matter of wines and liqueurs raises a sort of patronizing smile for the frailty of human nature, even when laced about by the strictest of rules.

[1] I have made much use of a monograph by Le Chanoine Néret (Épernay).

The fact is that these monastic experimenters and inventors did their work merely as men of business and of science. A community retired from the world must somehow be self-supporting. In the vineyard country one grew vines as elsewhere one grew corn and roots, and since the Benedictine rule enjoined much hard manual work, the monks would work in the vineyards so far as their greater duties of prayer and meditation and study permitted. At Clos-Vougeot the monks of Cîteaux did not perform the tillage, since it interfered with these higher duties; it was placed in the hands of lay brothers. Only in the monasteries were to be found the laboratories necessary for experiment; and there it was that the wines and liqueurs associated with different monasteries were perfected. Daudet's delightful caricature—*L'Elixir du Père Gaucher*—is based on the evident truth that the community, being itself poor, having (often) immense buildings to keep up, and being bound to give open hospitality and to take care of the poor of the neighbourhood, was obliged to do its utmost to keep up its revenues. Excellence of its produce was one of the best ways of securing an income; and the cellarers, who were the bursars of the communities, undertook the care of this business side of the community's life. The ordinary pictures of merry and bibulous monks, and pleasant tales like that medieval tale, worthy of Herodotus, *The Hole in the Wall*, reflect a state of things which probably

never existed in the closed Orders. Certainly that picture is not the picture of Dom Pérignon, who, if a keen and zealous business man, and an excellent scientist, was (what his epitaph rightly calls him) one " full of virtues, and chiefly of a paternal love towards poor folk." That he was forty-seven years Cellarer puts aside any possibility of his having been a Père Gautier or in the least degree like the hero of *The Hole in the Wall*, who, being walled up in one monastery for his drunkenness, was dug out by the monastery on the other side of the wall, and ultimately appointed Cellarer, with the result that after a second walling-up he was discovered by his original community and hailed as a miracle-worker.

Dom Pérignon is considered (there is not very much documentary evidence) to have discovered both the art of making wine white and clear, and also that of keeping its natural effervescence by bottling it at the right moment. It is probable that he discovered how to make white wine of red grapes at the same time; this might naturally arise from his studies in improving limpidity. The Champagne district, in which Hautvillers, Dom Pérignon's community, is situated, came rather late in the day into competition with the Gironde and Burgundy. Possibly its northern position made it necessary to take more care in the after manipulation of the wine than in more regularly sun-warmed districts; this, however, is merely a

guess, and one gets admirable unblended and still wines in the Champagne district to-day.

Dom Pérignon, born in 1638, was professed at St-Vannes-de-Verdun, but later on entered Hautvillers, and became Cellarer in 1668. Hautvillers had accepted the reform of the Benedictine rule which St-Vannes had undergone. It was a sad time for monasteries. *Abbés commendataires* and others, foisted on the communities, made much trouble and caused much litigation. Dom Pérignon would be kept in constant toils and worries which took him from the quiet of his study and his laboratory. He also held other offices, and must have been a very busy, almost downtrodden man. Chavaillaud's statue, which shows him in the joys of discovery, gives one side only of his much occupied life. There were always the poor with him, and their claims were probably growing more pressing as the power of the community to respond grew less. Through all he evidently kept a kind of sparkling serenity which makes his great discovery typical of his own nature. Whenever we drink sparkling wine we should remember him not as the jocund, red-nosed monk (who is really usually a friar) of the picture, but as a hard-working, earnestly praying, and deeply charitable man.

Wherein lay his discovery, or rather, his discoveries? Like most discoveries, they came from much long and patient observation. Like most discoveries, they came because he knew what he

meant to discover. Why should wine be cloudy and grey? Why should the bubbling of the juice altogether cease in the bottle? What were the best wine grapes, and on what soil did they best grow? What could be done by blending (as now the stronger wines of the mountain are blended with the lighter wines of the so-called "Côte des Blancs")? Such questions he asked himself; his notes have perished; we can only imagine him observing and tabulating, tabulating and observing, as did Mendel; content in his obscurity if only his community could be pulled through and his poor cared for.

Precisely what Dom Pérignon discovered, precisely what processes he perfected, must, in the absence of documents, remain in doubt. But he certainly laid the foundation of the great industry which centres round Reims and Épernay. Different methods are now known; processes if more complex are more easily carried through. Difficulties which Dom Pérignon had to face have vanished. He could not, at first, get bottles to stand the strain of effervescence; and in his earlier days there were no corks (he is said to have introduced the use of cork). But he certainly put his abbey far beyond any other wine-producing community, monastic or commercial, and the Champagne district far above any other district. His work goes on.

An interesting point, apt to be forgotten, is that

the vine can have too much sun. Not in the North : Champagne often misses its full sun record ; but elsewhere, where the sun may be excessive, the vines must be faced accordingly, and the protecting leaves retained in a proper quantity. Then the vine must have ventilation.

Perhaps also many drinkers of wine may not know that wine is something living, " energic, warm, sublime " ; by crushing you do not kill : you transfer the energy into the juice ; and processes of fermentation, in whatever part of the world, follow the natural seasons of the vine's budding, flowering, and maturing.

We have elsewhere seen that the popular idea that white wine is necessarily from white grapes is an error ; but the grapes for white wine are crushed quickly, and not long allowed to remain (by what is called *cuvée*) in contact with the coloured skins. Varieties of this " rapid " process give grey and pink wines. There is a good grey wine produced at St-Jacques, near Joigny, in Burgundy. There are many good pinks or *rosés* ; Tavel (Rhône) is one of them. Then popular divisions between whites and reds are sometimes erroneous ; Graves produces red and white, but red chiefly ; one must treat of them together, since the essential difference lies only in the crushing and the absence of the *cuvée* ; and Château Margaux grows a white wine. Then many " white " vineyards will grow a red wine for their labourers ; they prefer a rather rough

red to the liquid silk of Yquem and Climens. Then there are dry Barsacs. Champagne is three parts from red and one part from white grapes. The introduction of the cork is not ancient, and possibly it was the early cork which caused the first "Champagne" (red) to fizz. Then Dom Pérignon, a watchful student of his craft, found how and when to secure the "fizziness". Burgundies are not château-bottled (Miss Stern gives the convenient word "shottled") because, in a sense, there is no château; that is, not a single château, sentinel over a single domain, as in Gironde. Thus you have not the exact guarantee with Burgundy as with Bordeaux; but you are quite safe if you go to the right people; and you may get a better wine, under the name of your chosen district, than you are paying for.

No wine should be warmed at a fire. In our cruel country either decanters should be warmed, or the bottle, uncorked, placed in warm water. Care is much needed with all wines, but white least of all, in the handling. Whites do not need decanting, and should not be—reds do; but they should not be well shaken before taken as they so often are. A head-waiter in an English restaurant will often be extremely officious with a bottle of red; he will hold it up, lie it down, and do all sorts of unnecessary things; and he will ruin it. Great banquets take place where wines must be brought from a distance; great prices are paid for good

brands; they have all been shaken out of all recognition; cheaper wines, given a reasonable rest, would be far more palatable. The tiny particles which float about in shaken wine are precisely those which years of care have persuaded to settle at the bottom, just because they wreck the flavour. So much for these popular misunderstandings and errors. Let me, however, hasten to add that while some wines are trodden, most are pressed downwards; but some (Yquem, for instance) are pressed upwards; and some are not pressed at all—their own weight does the necessary pressing. Among these general remarks may be placed this useful table.

Two bottles (regulation size) make a *magnum*. About six a *jéroboam*, about eight an *impériale*, anything from six to twelve a *dame-jeanne* (what we call a demijohn). Examples of these can generally be seen in the entrance to cellars. The more wine there is together in a "bottle" the better. Wine improves more, for example, in bottles than in half-bottles. In the Madiran (Hautes Pyrénées) district wine is often kept in *bonbonnes*, varying in size, from which it is bottled off at the right moment. Big glasses should be used for good wine; the bouquet is better, the more there is exposed at once. For some wines the bowl of the glass may be warmed by the hand. The glass should be perfectly clear, to show the full colour. Lastly (for the present) wines mature at different paces;

some grow better as they grow older, and some grow old, in our sense, after a certain zenith; purchasers should inquire. The common notion that all wines always improve with age may perhaps be responsible for much unnecessary "fortifying".

In connection with Dom Pérignon's probable "discovery" of the cork, an extract from *Notes and Queries* may be of interest (February 19, 1927, p. 137):

Corks and Corkscrews.—In a recently published book entitled *Bottlescrew Days*, by Mr. André L. Simon, the author lays stress on the importance of the discovery of the corkscrew on the history of the wine, and says that, "with the advent of the corkscrew, which was commonly known as the bottlescrew, corks could be driven home flush with the neck of the bottle, bottles could be laid on their side, and wine could be left to mature".

What was the date and place of the introduction of corks and corkscrews? It is known that the inventor of the latter is unknown. Possibly the archives of some of the vineyard towns in France have records on the subject. A wine merchant mentions to me a fact not generally known, that every bottle of Champagne is corked twice before using. (J. Landfear Lucas.)

The corkscrew, no doubt, followed closely on the cork; and the attribution of the cork to Dom Pérignon may be thus far correct at least, that he introduced it as a necessary and universal means of closing bottles in which wine was to continue fermentation. The documentary evidence is slight.

In 1707 we hear of "corks of Spain" sent by the Marshal of Montesquiou, whereas in 1632, at Laon, *étoupes* were still used to stop bottles of wine offered to Louis XIII. Dom Pérignon's discovery, or perfecting of the discovery, was to preserve in bottles what was called "devil-wine". In the early eighteenth century corks are requested from Dom Pérignon's abbey of Hautvillers. This is circumstantial evidence, but it all seems to point in the same way.

I regret to add this note from Loudon, a botanist of the early nineteenth century:

> *Anchusa tinctoria*, Alkanet. Used by vintners for staining the corks of their port-wine bottles or for colouring and flavouring the spurious compounds sold as port.

But I am sure this is unknown to France!

CHAPTER III

TOURS AND THE LOIRE

EVERYONE, at any rate, has heard of Vouvray, and that is a good beginning. Athos, in *The Three Musketeers,* drank wine of Anjou fearlessly, and did great credit to his nurture. Let, therefore, Saintsburys wax cynical; wise men will stick to their opinions; and he who has tasted a pleasant sample of the slightly tinged, almost amber-pink, wines of Touraine, Vouvray, Anjou, with their little delicate natural sparkle—and these wines may be of the cheaper variety; they may so be the purer—will not mind cynicism but will drink unabashed, he will lift a head "bloody but unbowed" to meet the brimming goblet.

"Natural": that is the word we want. Why not a great "back to Nature" movement in wines and in food? We live on chemical foods; on flour that is dimly flour; rice that has lost its bone- and muscle-building qualities (which it certainly has still in some parts of the world); tinned stuff that being C3 makes us all grow up C3,

> Brainless as chimpanzees,
> Meagre as lizards,

though Calverley would not now have selected chimpanzees for brainlessness.

Why not back to Nature in our wines? We English, knowing nothing in the ordinary way about wines, know quite a lot about convention; and convention demands that on any great occasion you must put before your guests a blended wine, a wine almost "faked"—using the word in its more honourable sense—to meet a possibly ignorant and artificial taste of the British palate. Hence ports, expensive indeed, but unlike what you get in the Douro; sherries, not wholly recalling the neighbourhood of Xérès; and hence the enthronement at weddings, or national festivals, and in melodrama, and on the inferior stage, of the blended amber wine of Champagne. Somehow anything else would seem impossible—now.

That is why Saumur (and to a slight extent Vouvray itself) seems to me a bit of an anti-climax as one goes westwards along the Loire. One is in the neighbourhood of many simple little wines of great delicacy of taste (with the curious Touraine-Anjou after-taste) which do not conform to our preconceived notions, but are the true thing, or near it. Why this craze for "champagnization"? Saumur can do it, though the experts, or those who like to appear experts, can find no Saumur even half dry. Alas! it is the foreign taste which calls for these expensive, though quite legitimate, methods of producing the blended sparkle.

The feminine notion of a wine is merely one which seems to run to the top of your nose with a tickling sensation, and then to lift the top of your head, just above the nose, gently up, as if on a hinge at the back. And since the feminine taste often decides, *dux femina facti*, we must have the wines according. But to one who wants to get back nearer to Nature, Touraine and Anjou—less Saumur, which has, however, its private excellences —will appeal.

Till one gets to Vouvray itself there are no special wine-centres, though the pleasing varieties are all about the country-side. The traveller, by inquiry, may track down little local glories into little villages; but their wines will not appear in the wine-list when he gets home, nor indeed often in those of France. Saumurs he will find at home; and if he compares their price in a reputable merchant's list and then notes how much—merely because they are "Champagne type"—he pays away in sheer profit to the restaurant, he will have a sort of idea how much, on the wine account alone, he has paid for the staring lights and what the novelists call "spotless napery", and the vile jazz band which prevents him making that conversation for the sake of which he has come there. O purblind race of miserable men!

But we must get to the country and leave these vapourings.

The first great wine-centre on the Loire is Orléans—a great commercial centre, at all events, though so far as we are aware the city does not actually give its name to any special brand.

If on your way to Blois, or from Blois, you desire to look at the Sologne—a much-decried district between Loire and Cher, where marshes have become nurseries of trees, and only enough of primitive wildness has been left to make it a joy to the "hunter" and the fisherman—you will probably find the wines, pleasant little white wines, of the Champagne of Berry lying south-west of the Sologne itself; whether from Chabris, Reuilly, or Issoudun. Certainly go to Issoudun-en-Berry to see the market-place, with the Tour Blanche and the belfry, and the glass of St-Cyr. At Blois you are "getting warm"; Vouvray is near. When you have seen the castle, St Nicholas's Church, delightful wooden houses, the gardens of the Bishop's Palace, and feel hungry, you will demand, unless sentimental feelings forbid, a *pâté d'alouettes* and wine of the neighbourhood, either white or red, for both are good. Do not be precipitate and order Vouvray as yet. There is more than one Vouvray about; but do not make any mistake; only the true Vouvray, where the Cisse meets the Loire, will be of any use to you. A charming group Vouvray makes when seen at a little distance; it lies at the foot of its vine-crowned slopes; its belfry dominates the town; all seems to sparkle about

it, and one fancies the atmosphere to be more amber than elsewhere. Vouvray wines have long been famous. You will find open-air restaurants where you may taste them; and you can do worse than make Vouvray one of your head-quarters for seeing the châteaux, certainly if you have a car.

Indeed, in our haste to reach Vouvray we have overpassed Amboise, but this, along with Chaumont, Chenonceaux, Montrésor, Loches, Azay, Ussé, Montrichard, and others, you can easily reach from Vouvray; and you will do well to demand on your journeyings the wines of Montlouis (not far from Vouvray, and its wines not far from Vouvray's) or Joué (reds) or Bourgueil, reserving Tours exclusively for that of Rochecorbon. How charming is Rochecorbon, with its little peaceful valley and its hills above, all massed with vines! Do not miss it. There is an easy and pretty walk from Tours, over the hill-side, past the "English staircase", and then back by the river with a tram to pick you up if you are weary. If you have time, visit the big barn of Meslay, up the valley. And since I have stumbled on mention of Bourgueil, you can do worse than fare thither and see its ancient church. The wines of Bourgueil are reds, and the grape is said to be a Chambertin grape, which has won a new flavour in its new home.

On the Upper Loire will also be found good wines at Gien, south-east from Orléans, with its old bridge, its quays, its castle, and many good old

houses. At Gien you should be able also to get the neighbouring brands of Bonny and Ousson. Other Loire wines worth mention are Roanne and St-Nizier, and (in Haute-Loire) Blesle.

Tours, always a place of great importance in France, makes an excellent centre from which to explore the châteaux and vineyards of the Loire. In addition to being for a time practically the French capital, Tours contained the tomb of St Martin himself, and naturally became a centre of attraction in the realms of history, art, and learning. Very much of interest remains, including what is left of the tomb of St Martin in the crypt of his basilica. Of the old basilica we have only the twelfth-century clock-tower and the Tour de Charlemagne, which is said to contain the tomb of his third wife, Luitgard, who died in 800. There is part of a small Renaissance cloister, but what little the Huguenots left of old St Martin's was almost entirely destroyed in comparatively recent times.

The Cathedral, a striking example of Gothic art, with an elaborate Flamboyant façade and two beautiful Renaissance towers, contains the tomb of two children of Anne of Brittany and Charles VIII.

The old streets of Tours are full of charm, and many beautiful houses may be found about the Place du Grand Marché: the Hôtel Gouin, in the Rue du Commerce, must not be missed.

Tours has now no castle of its own (our own King

Henry II built one there in the twelfth century), but at Plessis-les-Tours, which is reached by the tram from the station to Port-Sainte-Anne and a short walk, may be seen the remains of Louis XI's "castle", really little more than a castellated palace. When complete, its battlements, drawbridges, and defences gave it the appearance of a prison rather than a Royal residence, but there is very little of it left now, and the interior is only shown to the medical faculty. (Is the reason for this, one wonders, because of their special interest in Louis' many maladies, for the cure of which he passed so many hours in prayer in the castle chapel ?) At La Rabaterie, not far off, is a farm which is said to have been the manor-house of the famous barber Olivier Le Daim.

Among the many pleásing walks round and about Tours is that to Rochecorbon, from whence one may visit the famous "Lantern", or Watch Tower, and also the great tithe barn of Meslay; and the tramway can also be used for extending the expedition to Vouvray. For Rochecorbon it is best to go by tram to Ste-Radegonde, and from thence to walk on past the church and the abbey of Marmoutier to the little town itself. The little church of Ste-Radegonde, which is built right into the rock, has a fine Renaissance doorway and an apse and tower of the twelfth century.

The abbey of Marmoutier was founded by St Martin and was, in fact, one of the first monasteries

of the west. Here Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade at the end of the eleventh century, and from here many other monasteries were founded. Although little is left of the church, many interesting remains of the abbey may be seen, including the cell of St Brice, St Martin's successor as abbot. There are two chapels, to one of which one mounts by a winding staircase. In this latter chapel it is said that the tombs of the Seven Sleepers may be found. Passing from the chapel by a gallery one enters a little cell, and from thence on by a stairway to the cell of St Leonard, cut in the rock. Other tombs and cells, also cut in the rock, include a Gallo-Roman *cella*, now dedicated to St Patrick.

At the top of the cliff is the castle of Rougemont, at one time the Abbot's residence, and down below, on the bank of the Loire, is the fine thirteenth-century gateway, with pyramidal turret and open gallery, also a tower which served both as bell-tower and keep of the abbey.

Leaving the river-side and ascending the hills, one passes the curious steps cut in the rock, which are called " the English staircase ", and then continuing along the top, through the splendid vineyards for which the district is famous, Rochecorbon is reached, lying peacefully below in its valley. The church, a Romanesque building, is worth the wayfarer's attention.

From Tours you will not omit a brief excursion

to Joué-les-Tours, where you will find an excellent red wine known as Joué, for short.

Another pleasant place to reach by tram from Tours is Luynes (anciently Maillé), whose massive castle dominates the little town. The present castle is mainly early twelfth-century work, and stands on the site of the earlier building which was destroyed by Foulques le Réchin, Count of Anjou. The moat and castle walls are open to visitors, and so, too, is the inner court, enclosing the very charming dwelling-house, built rather in the style of Plessis and other Royal residences—altogether a very attractive place to wander about in.

Luynes itself is quite delightful, and there is a fine fifteenth-century church with a single nave and a Flamboyant doorway. At a little distance from the town there is a Roman aqueduct.

Loches—castle, church, town, taken as a whole—presents perhaps as fine a picture of the Middle Ages as we may find anywhere in France to-day. Church and castle, both of very ancient origin, stand upon the summit of a lofty rock and dominate the town. There was, indeed, a castle in existence at the time of Gregory of Tours, but of this nothing is left, and the earliest part remaining is the eleventh-century keep, built by Foulques the Black, that famous castle-builder, or his son Geoffrey. As it

now stands, surrounded by massive walls and battlements, it is one of the finest medieval fortresses in France—in a very strong position, and having served in turn as castle, royal residence, and State prison. Foulques the Red, Count of Anjou, received the castle (the earlier building, of course) as part of the dowry of his wife, Rosille, and it belonged to this family for many centuries—being for a time, of course, a possession of the kings of England, who were Counts of Anjou also, from the accession of Henry II.

Although these great castles built by Foulques the Black were designed to serve as stepping-stones towards that conquest of Touraine which was his life's ambition, and although so much of his time was spent in deeds of cruelty (for which three pilgrimages to Jerusalem may or may not have sufficed as expiation), we must not forget the churches he built and the monasteries he founded—contributions to the art and civilization of his period and race. His son, Geoffrey the Hammer (whose nurse, it is said, was a blacksmith's wife), captured the Count of Blois and completed the conquest of Touraine. He left no son to succeed him, but two nephews, Geoffrey with the Beard and Foulques le Réchin, aspired to possession of the domain. Grim days of fighting and bloodshed ensued. Geoffrey was captured and imprisoned in one of the deep subterranean dungeons of Loches Castle, where he was kept for thirty years, becoming old and half-

mad ere the day of his release. There was, indeed, a plot to free him in which Stephen of Blois was concerned, but it proved unsuccessful, Foulques managing to win over Stephen to his side by doing homage to him as his superior lord. Geoffrey was kept in prison until his nephew (another Geoffrey) became lord of Loches and all the rest of his father's vast domains, and the poor uncle, no doubt only too glad to win freedom, then signed a document resigning all claims to the County of Anjou.

Later on, by the marriage of Henry of Anjou (Henry II of England) to Aliénor, Duchess of Aquitaine, further provinces were added to their vast inheritance; and in fact by that time the Counts of Anjou were not only lords of greater possessions in France than King Louis himself, but, as we have seen above, held the throne of England also.

Henry's sons, aided by Louis VII, rebelled against him, and the castle of Loches was burnt in 1173. Henry was succeeded by Richard I, who gave Loches as part of the ransom demanded for his liberation by the Emperor Henry VI of Germany; but his son John ("Lackland") seems to have spent a good deal of time there, and the castle was besieged in 1204 by Philip II of France, who eventually gained possession of it.

The great round tower was added in the fifteenth century, and Charles VI strengthened the town also and surrounded it with walls. It was at

Loches that Charles VII received from Joan of Arc the news of the deliverance of Orléans from the English foe.

Loches must then have looked, as it soon became, a great State prison, where many notable prisoners were confined, one of the first being the Duc d'Alençon, who joined the rebellion against the Dauphin in 1456 and whose sentence of death was afterwards altered to imprisonment. He was never left alone whilst confined at Loches, and was not allowed to receive nor to write letters, nor to have any money—a rigorous imprisonment, indeed, for a prince. Louis XI set him free, but Louis it was who is said to have first used "iron cages" for the confinement, more rigorous still, of important prisoners. These cages were actually made of wood, strengthened outside with bands of iron, and were constructed so that the prisoner could neither stand upright nor lie down at full length, being about six and a half feet round by five and a half feet in height. Food was handed in through a little hole, and there were some primitive arrangements for the prisoner's washing. Whether this diabolical invention was the idea of the famous Cardinal La Balue or of a brother bishop, the Bishop of Verdun, we do not know, but it is certain that they were both placed in iron cages during their periods of imprisonment. La Balue was confined at Loches for eight years, and possibly his cage was placed in the big hall of the tower

and not where the guides point out to visitors to-day.

Other famous prisoners there were Philippe de Commines and the Count of St-Vallier, father of Diana of Poitiers. De Commines had been a favourite of Louis XI, but was later on arrested by the Regent, Anne of Beaujeu, and "caged" at Loches. The inscription attributed to him, which may be seen at the top of the tower staircase, reads as follows :

I am sometimes sorry to have spoken, but never to have kept silence.

Among the wall-scratchings or *graffiti* which are to be seen at Loches (and which, indeed, may be found in most ancient castles which have been used as prisons) several are attributed to that famous and picturesque person Ludovic Sforza, who was of humble birth but became Duke of Milan and a great patron of art in his own domain. Captured in battle by Louis XII, he was imprisoned first at Pierre-Encise, from where he escaped by hiding in a hay-cart, and then at Loches. Here, in a dark cell, lighted only by a small window, he occupied himself with painting and carving inscriptions upon the damp walls. He died there in 1508, and was probably buried in the great collegiate church of St-Ours. During part of his imprisonment he was allowed a measure of liberty, guarded by some Scottish soldiers, and in the round tower

we may see various inscriptions attributed to his hand. One of them, "Sau San" (or "Sav San"), has never yet been explained, but might have been taken to mean *Sauf et sain* were not all his other inscriptions in excellent French. Other wall-scratchings at Loches are in Catalan and Greek, but the majority in French and Latin, and one—a name only—in English.

Loches was not entirely given up to the purposes of a prison, for within its spacious halls Francis I held his merry Court, and entertained with great splendour and luxury the Emperor Charles V while on his way from Spain to Ghent; but it is, none the less, chiefly as the scene of many tragedies that it remains in the memory, and there are underground prisons to be visited lower still than Sforza's gloomy cell. One such is described by the guides as the prison of the *oubliette*, but probably these curious hollows or excavations were originally used in connexion with the quarrying of stone, and later as a means of communicating with the different stages of these underground cells.

One man, at least, managed to escape from Loches. This was René Fontaine, who in the year II (of the Revolution) escaped by a passage-window into a court, where he discovered a ladder, by which he mounted to the window of the little tower which overlooked the garden of a certain Morinet. Clambering along by the aid of a vine, he fell on to a projection of the tower. Proceeding

again, with the help of another neighbour's vine, he fell into the cemetery, and there was found by some of the townsfolk, who carried him to the hospital.

Agnès Sorel, that favourite of Charles VII who exercised over the weak king such a remarkable influence for good, was born in the district, and lived in the castle for some years. She was buried in the church of St-Ours, but her tomb now stands in the Tour d'Agnès, and is very beautiful. A statue to her memory was erected in the Château Royal, a building now used as the Sous-Préfecture. This latter building was probably that used to house a famous prisoner, the Duc d'Elbeuf, after the assassination of the Duc de Guise at Blois in 1588.

The church of St-Ours possesses one of the finest Romanesque porches in Touraine, but is chiefly remarkable for the two great pyramids which stand between the towers, forming the roof of the nave, and which give to it an impression of great height. The crypt, which dates at least from the twelfth century, bears traces of very early paintings on its walls. The only complete picture, however, is that of St Brice, the successor of St Martin of Tours.

Chinon is celebrated for many reasons. Ste Jeanne d'Arc on the one hand, Rabelais (who lived here, but was born probably at La Devinière) on

the other, are surely enough for one place. The Rue J.-J. Rousseau alone marks it out as a glorious medieval relic, and the Rue Voltaire, with its little turrets, is another sheer joy. As for the castle and its memories—a separate work is needed to describe the one and to relate adequately the other. Indeed, Chinon, with that lavishness of the medieval which so delights and almost wearies us, gives us three castles—*tria iuncta in uno*: though the innermost is that which is tenderest in memories. From the garden of this innermost castle there is a glorious view over the Vienne.

But Chinon holds, too, an honoured place in this work because it gives its name to one of the best of the district wines. This is all as it should be.

At Chinon the wayfarer, who is by now no doubt hot on the trail, will perceive in the map the name Faye-la-Vineuse, which cannot fail to attract him. It will be worth while his going thither not only to see the crypt, or rather crypts, of the fine church of Faye, but because his route will run through Richelieu, one of the most fascinating of quaint places, all built at once and to order, and rather like a little Versailles. The local variety here is amber with a very slight sparkle, and the usual Touraine little after-taste.

But now we must banish that word "little", for whether we have diverted to Richelieu or not —and if we do so we shall see Champigny as well, with its beautiful Sainte Chapelle—we are

approaching Saumur, where nothing "little", or "common or mean", can lurk in the way of wine.

> For sovereignty of wines let fools contest,
> Whate'er (at need) will go right there is best.

Let me, therefore, keep clear of the controversy whether the sparkling "champagnized" wines of Saumur are merely "like ginger-beer but not so nice". My own strong opinion is that the talk about Saumur being too sweet—even the driest—is merely talk, to impress your fellow-clubmen with your erudite taste in lofty matters. The absurdity is that this taste is educated, artificially developed, and that by a kind of vicious circle the blended wines are equally developed to meet this taste. Once more I repeat it—and this must be the last echo of the subject—get back, and as near back as you can, in these things, to Nature, and confess that many of the simpler wines are as delightful as the more elaborate, what though they do not seem to blow your head off. Let this not, however, militate at all against the products of Saumur—of their kind admirable. The process is elaborate, but it is sound and clean, and very largely, all said and done, "natural". You may go and see how it is done: there is no deception, no rabbit up the sleeve of the manipulators.

But if you feel it your British duty to be disappointed with the wines of Saumur you will not be with Saumur, nor with its surroundings—

Fontevrault, Montsoreau, Bagneux (for its dolmens), Candes, Cunault, or indeed St-Hilaire-St-Florent, where are the great galleries or cellars (most are cut in the rock) of the well-known Saumur firms.

As for Saumur itself, its castle alone makes it glorious; but you are not at an end there. On the quay is the hôtel de ville, along it is a famous church, Des Ardilliers, while in the direction of the Thouet is a yet more famous church, Notre-Dame-de-Nantilly, whether architecturally, historically, or in virtue of its famous tapestries.

Then Saumur is a town of horses—not only of stuffed or skeleton horses in the museum, but of very live and real horses in the riding-school. Should you arrive for the Carrousel, staying, if you are wise, outside Saumur itself, you may find that the cellars of Saumur run dry for the time; but you will see magnificent horses and horsemanship, and, if you really are interested in vines and want to know all about them, you must spend a long time, when the grapes are ripening, in the garden, where most kinds of vine are grown and tended; and perhaps you will be able to get in touch with the professors of viticulture and learn quite a lot about propagating, phylloxera, and a great many other things, among which what interests me most is the different aspect of the rows of the vines in different localities, dictated, it seems, rather by the prevailing winds than by the direction of the midday sun. Vergil has something to say about this in his rather

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scanty notes about vines; but he seems rather to confuse the vines of Naples, where he wrote, with the vines of the north, where he was born. Another point of interest is the period of gathering; for certain wines you pick early, before maturity; for others you leave the grape to become a raisin, or nearly so, before pressing, though this does not occur so often in France as in lower Italy and Sicily, where the *passito* is famous. Vergil clearly contemplates the grapes remaining on the vines as long as they reasonably can, since he speaks of the danger of winter storms.

At Saumur one may spend an enjoyable week or even more. Its wines, its horses, its surroundings, and, last if not least, the little town itself, are all quite charming. The twisting old streets with their quaint old houses will serve well to occupy the wayfarer's spare hours between visiting the castle, the churches, and the cavalry school. One of the most delightful streets is that on the island, called the Rue de la Visitation, in which is the handsome mansion (an excellent example of pre-Renaissance architecture) built by King René, and known as the Queen of Sicily's House.

Returning to the town over the long bridge from the island a fine view of the castle is obtained. On reaching the quay one should turn to the left to see the two hôtels de ville, the old and the new, alongside each other; the old one has the

appearance rather of a fortress than of a peaceful town hall. Near by is the early thirteenth-century chapel of St-Jean, and, continuing on one's way to the castle, the historic church of St-Pierre may next be seen. The ancient church of St-Pierre was burnt, at the time of the destruction of the castle, by Guy de Poitiers, but was replaced by another on the same site, and the building we now see is mostly twelfth-century work, with a Renaissance aisle and a seventeenth-century font. There is a fine Romanesque door to the south transept.

Passing on to the castle (the earlier building—burnt, as we have seen above, by Guy de Poitiers—was mainly the work of Geoffrey, son of Foulques the Black), set high on a cliff above the river Loire, we find there two excellent museums, one of which is devoted to "The Horse". The museum containing the general collection has good examples of china and pottery, and some very find Gobelin tapestries. Other notable tapestries are in the church of St-Pierre mentioned above, and in the church of Nantilly, not far away. Some of these latter are reputed to have come from the Abbey of Fontevrault. The church of Nantilly, which is of the twelfth century, has at the west end an oratory of Louis XI, and a very charming inscription set up by the good King René to the memory of his nurse Théphaine.

The church of St-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet has

some traces of the twelfth century also, and behind a house in the Rue St-Nicolas is a curious Lanterne des Morts, with an octagonal cupola on a square base.

Saumur is the best point from which to make an expedition to Fontevrault Abbey, which dates from the end of the eleventh century, and where were buried Richard Cœur de Lion, Henry II and his wife, Eleanor of Guienne, and Isabella of Angoulême, consort of King John.

The Fontevrault order, founded in 1109 by Robert d'Arbrissel, was for both men and women, monks and nuns alike (a most unusual arrangement) being under the authority of an abbess. In its great days it must have been a wonderfully rich and beautiful abbey, with its splendid library and immense rooms given up to illuminating and the making of tapestries. The nuns were all of high birth, and among the abbesses, many of whom were princesses, was a sister of Madame Montespan, by name Gabrielle de Rochechouart-Mortemart de Vivonne. Besides the abbey church, the refectory, the chapter-house, and cloister are shown—not to mention the octagonal " Tower of Evrault ", a twelfth-century building which served for the kitchen.

Of the abbey of St-Florent very little now remains beyond the old gate and the crypt ; the church of St-Barthélemy is in the style known as Angevin Gothic. St-Hilaire, next to St-Florent, has an

ancient church, partly cut in the rock, and a dolmen ; but those who are interested in dolmens must certainly go to Bagneux, where is the largest, or one of the largest, dolmens in France.

Gennes has remains of a Roman amphitheatre and aqueduct, also the fine church of St-Eusèbe and a tower. One of the best churches to be visited from Saumur, however, is that of Cunault, with a very ancient tower, possibly of the eleventh century, and splendid examples of Poitevin Romanesque architecture and of thirteenth-century Angevin Gothic.

At the junction of the Loire and Vienne is Candes, with its remarkable church, built over the little cell where St Martin died in 397 (his body was later removed to Tours), and strongly fortified, with towers enclosing the whole front. Its porch is unusually magnificent, with statues flanking and surmounting the doorway, through which may be seen the slender pillar that supports the porch vaulting. All, in fact, is delightful—its proportions, decorations, and its very graceful pillars—and should on no account be missed. There is a castle, too, of later date.

Other castles in the Saumur district are at Montsoreau ; at Baugé (this one rebuilt by King René) ; and at Souzay, where King René's daughter, Marguerite of Anjou, the wife of our King Henry VI, died in 1482. Not far from Souzay are troglodytes' caves. Montreuil-Bellay, a very charming

place on the river Thouet, has three castles—one of them hardly a castle in the strict sense, as it was used as a residence by the canons of the collegiate church. To them belonged also the wonderful old square kitchen, standing apart from the castle itself, which still possesses two fire-places, and in earlier days had a third in the centre of the building. The new castle contains a particularly fine staircase.

The busy little town of Cholet, for all its modern look, was an important centre of conflict during the Vendée wars of the eighteenth century.

You will leave Saumur with sorrow, and in view of the charming neighbourhood it is a very pleasing place in which to make a prolonged stay, even if its wines are . . . but I am done with that controversy.

Brissac should certainly detain the traveller—not only for its wines, which have a good name in the locality, though not enjoying a European reputation, but also for its famous castle, which may be visited during August. Decoration was lavished upon it during its restoration, under the Marshal, who was also Duke, of Brissac, in the early seventeenth century. There are works of David d'Angers—among a galaxy of lesser, but famous, artistic names.

Now we are at Angers; but perhaps before going there it may be well to run south to Chalonnes,

where the chalky slopes produce a good white wine; and should you feel inclined for a beefsteak it will be well to proceed to Cholet, which is a great centre for meat, dispatched in large quantities to the Paris Smithfield. If, on the other hand, you work east from Chalonnes, you will find a pretty, sparkling, light, amber wine at Faye-Chanzé.[1]

As for Angers, what can be more imposing than its castle, with its five stout towers running off from the river? Here is, naturally enough, the centre of the "great" Angevin wines, and you must stay a long time if you mean to go through their list. That will help you to see the glories of Angers, city of King René, and once almost capital of England; in still earlier days a great Roman centre with amphitheatre, baths, and all that Rome delighted in.

It is a little difficult to know where to begin and end at Angers. For wet days there are plenty of interiors—notably the museum, where, on the ground floor, are collected works of David d'Angers. Of the castle one can visit only a portion, but the Lesser Castle of the Dukes of Anjou, where René was probably born, can be seen, and the outside of the chapel. It is said that we have in England glass from this chapel, with a portrait of René, but this I have not located. The Gothic cathedral is a magnificent monument; the old Bishop's Palace is now a museum, and contains several ancient portions. Besides these there is the

[1] This is obtainable in London.

ancient hospital, also a museum, the ancient barns (again, a museum, where are displayed parts of old wooden houses), the Tower of St-Aubin, and the Renaissance Logis Pincé. Well for the visitor that the light wines of Anjou are at hand to help him through this orgy of sight-seeing. At Angers you will possibly demand the wines of Clisson, or at least the wines which circulate there, and go to slake the drouthy throats of seamen and Americans at Nantes and St-Nazaire—their names chime sweetly, like mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells, or like a line of Rossetti's—Gorges, Le Pallet, Monnières, Muscadet. A charming place, as nearly every place in France is; two rivers, Sèvre and Moine. What with two fourteenth-century bridges, a fine old dominating castle, and all picturesquely grouped, you could do, if you were not of malice prepense a wayfarer in the wine-list, without the wines. And now we are nearly off the map—at any rate quite off the vine-map. But why not go on to Les Moutiers? If it is summer and the sea is calm you can go thence almost anywhere.

Not far from the Loire group, at Bourges, you will find the wines of Quincy and of Sancerre, good whites and reds—Fricambault, Le Thou, La Comtesse, Clos Muzeau, Chêne Marchand, Champtin. Visit therefore Bourges, not forgetting its splendid twelfth- and thirteenth-century cathedral, and the famous House of Jacques Cœur; but there is an

infinity of interest besides in the Flamboyant church of Notre-Dame, many fine wooden houses, the so-called House of Queen Blanche (of the fifteenth century), the regional museum, and much else. Jacques Cœur, like many rich men, had a rather unhappy life, but he is one of the great names in French commerce and architecture, and his house, or rather palace, vies with the best work along the Loire.

In working down from the Loire to the Garonne the wayfarer need not feel wholly lost; Thouars (Deux-Sèvres) will help him through with Brezé, and there are (to fall back upon) Le Puy, Vauzelles, Bilazaix, Pompois, Saulbrois; and while going through these Thouars will provide much of interest—its castle, chapel, bridges, and very fine churches—to occupy you some time.

CHAPTER IV

COGNAC AND ARMAGNAC

THE Cognac district, or Champagne de Cognac, is in two parts, divided geologically, and therefore rather irregularly. In fact, one part rather encircles or encloses the other. Other districts help the production of *petites Champagnes*, rather farther west of Cognac itself, which though the distributing centre is not the geographical centre of its district.

The vine is an expert geologist, or at any rate is sensitive almost beyond any other known plant to geological formation. The same, or nearly the same, formation gives us the wines of Champagne and the wines grown only for distillation in the Cognac neighbourhood. Some of those which help the produce of *petite Champagne* are from districts near the sea, which might appear unsuitable to vine-growing, but have beneath the sand just that something for which the vine-roots are searching. Thus a great plain (as also in Champagne—though there we have more pronounced hills) produces the best wines to stand the testing processes of distillation.

Let it be for experts to say whether the juice of the grape suffers or improves by distillation. That the spirit evolved has many special qualities we know well. But I regret I am Philistine enough still to associate Cognac, even *fine*, with occasions, rare enough, when I was ill, and to believe that (while there are other suitable times for their absorption) the imbibing of Cognacs, or strong-flavoured liquors, generally with coffee (provided it be coffee) is one of the great and foolish errors of our civilization. Good coffee should stand alone, and should mark the conclusion of all alcoholics, not an excuse for more. When I have added that to me the most palatable form of Cognac is what they call abroad "sherry", or cherry brandy, I have made clear to the reviewer, "red in tooth and claw," that I am an improper person to have written this work.

In the plain of Niort, and even among the fens of the Sèvre, you will often find pleasant local wines, usually white. As you approach the rivers they get better, and (as before remarked) wines do not mind sea, if all else is suitable; the Île de Ré has a good white wine. Near Royan, at Médis, there is a good variety. Thus Cognac can throw a fairly wide net even in a country which at first does not seem a first-class vineyard country.

Cognac itself is both pleasing and historic, when you really get into it. The industrial and residential part clusters round the older portion, and

gives a dull belt to work through, but in the centre, round about the bridge and the famous castle, Cognac is indeed old-world and charming. The chief historical memories of Cognac centre round the childhood of François I; the house of his nurse is shown. Not far off (at Châtres) is a famous Romanesque church, now a barn—and nearer still, in the Faubourg St-Martin, is a fine church of the eleventh century. The castle is only of the fifteenth century, but still imposing, if a little severe; the gate on the quay of the port is most dignified, and when the correct sort of barges are lying at the quay the whole makes a very picturesque group from the right bank of the Charente.

It is not very far to make a pilgrimage to Ségonzac, which, though unknown to wine-list fame, is also a redoubtable producer of "Cognacs". It has an ancient church with a fine Romanesque crypt.

Jonzac is farther, but its castle is very well worth seeing—a most imposing pile. Jarnac, uninteresting in itself, has a large commerce in *eaux-de-vie*, and gives its name to those of its district.

No true Cognac may be had outside *Charente*. The Government therefore protects the real thing by a "regional receipt". While it may seem rather odd that two great wine districts are given over to distillation, while France is daily importing wines in large quantities, the answer lies in the

demand, both in France and elsewhere; and Cognac, unlike many alcohols which seek, or sought, to employ its name, is not only genuine but, in proper moderation, health-giving. Distillation and distribution is an immense industry; and the more praiseworthy when one remembers the difficulties which had to be overcome after the phylloxera plague during the war, and during the period when the name "Cognac" could still be pirated. The mark of true Cognac is its improvement with age, its want of the peculiar taste of common "brandy," the presence of a delicate and refined flavour, and the sort of "expansion" which it effects in the mouth. It is to be drunk only in quite small quantities, at the very end of a meal and in infinitesimal "tastes".

The process aims merely at removing from good wine, possessing bouquet and flavour, all the watery element (a very great percentage). The chief grapes are Folle Blanche, St-Émilion, and Colombar. The wines (white) are at once, after pressing, subjected to different grades of heat. The process is highly skilled, and the skill is often hereditary. The oak barrels contribute something both to taste and colour. For soil, what we call "poverty" is desirable, and chalk is best. The "regions" (for all depends on the soil) are La Grande Champagne, round Cognac itself; La Petite Champagne, which runs round La Grande in a horseshoe shape; Les Borderies, northwards; Les Fins Bois, a final

encircling belt. Nowhere else can the same result be produced. The Treaty of Versailles had special articles to guard the authenticity of Cognac. No one would decry and combat excess of alcohol-drinking more than the producers of Cognac, simply because (among other reasons) drinking it for the sake of drinking dulls the palate, and is really an insult to their highly specialized product—and artists do not like insults.

The difference between Armagnac and Cognac is partly of soil and partly of process. The grapes are the same; but the results in Armagnac are lighter and finer; more in the way of flavour—some speak of plum, nut, quince, apple, violet flavours—and less in "body." Not that any of these flavours are imported into the liquor: all is as natural as can be. Armagnac wines are distilled at 52 degrees only, but Charente wines about 73. The liquor therefore does not compete against Cognac, but is supplementary, or complementary, to it. My own taste—for what it is worth—finds Armagnac the more delicate.

Auch is a most impressive centre of the Armagnac. From the north it is approached up the valley of the Gers, picturesque itself, and with several striking places; Lectoure is one of these, and there is a very fine church at Layrac, on the left bank of the river. Auch is chiefly made by its magnificent view of the cathedral and the so-called "Tour de

César ", seen from the foot of the great staircase. In the choir of the cathedral are wood-carvings (the stalls, the panellings, misereres) which, after studying those at Brou, Amiens, and St-Bertrand-de-Comminges, I should venture to call the finest in France. The work is most lavish, and its standard is very high throughout ; the work was spread over many years and one can trace the passage towards Italian Renaissance work. There are capital old houses at Auch as well, and good streets, and a museum of interest.

The other centre of the Armagnac industry is Condom, with a sixteenth-century cathedral and a good cloister. The vines are all round Auch and Condom, and produce a capital white wine, which is, however, very largely distilled.

Armagnac falls into three parts : Bas Armagnac (which produces the best types), Haut Armagnac, and Le Tenarèze. The wines are good as well as their distillations. The grape is chiefly Piquepoul (also spelt Picpol), which is only another name for the famous Folle Blanche of the Charentes (Cognac) district. Other grapes (only a very small percentage) are the Clairette and the Jurançon (this furnishes a famous wine in the Pau district). After the phylloxera Picquepouls were grafted on disease-resisting hybrids.

Distributing centres, besides Auch and Condom, are Eauze, Nogaro, and Cazaubon.

AUCH

The wines are made in the usual method of white wines, and in an abundant year may be distilled in all haste, even while fermentation is still active. Cognac is distilled at a high degree of heat; Armagnac is treated in *alambics*, differing from the *chaudières* of the Charentes, and at a less heat. Too much heat spoils distillation, and gives the harmful effect called a *coup de feu*.

Wood-fires are best; and distillation once begun goes on continuously. There are wheeled *alambics* which go round like the wheeled presses of Burgundy. A great deal depends upon the casks, which must be of *chêne noir* only. At the lower degree of heat of distillation (about 53° C.) the Armagnacs age more rapidly than Cognacs and can therefore get into commerce more rapidly, and without further handling or addition (Cognac in its later stages sometimes receives an addition of water). The excellence of Armagnac no doubt depends largely on the equable climate of the district generally, which is a boast, and not a vain boast, of Auch and its neighbourhood.

CHAPTER V

BORDEAUX AND ITS DISTRICT

BORDEAUX, though a city only and not a district, has given its name to a whole series of wines—on the Dordogne, on the Garonne, in the Médoc, and elsewhere. This is because the trade in these wines centres, and always has centred, in Bordeaux itself, especially during the English occupation; and Bordeaux the city rightly stands on a level with Burgundy the district.

Owing to its admirable position Bordeaux was always a great seaport. This may seem a paradox, since Bordeaux is not on the sea; but up to fairly recent times the safest and therefore busiest seaports were at some little distance from the coastline, so avoiding piratical inroads. It was for the inland Troy that Greeks and Asians fought, just because, lying inland (even without a navigable river) it did duty as a port, since the merchandise, to avoid awkward currents, cut across the peninsula overland. Athens, Mycenæ, and Rome were off the sea. When ships of greater draught began to ply such inland ports as could not take deep tonnage fell and decayed; London, Rouen, Liverpool,

Bordeaux, and other deep-water ports continued and prospered.

Bordeaux (Bardigala) was an important Gallic city when the Romans came. On the space between the Devèze and the Peugue was a spot suitable for habitation, and here lived an early race of lake-dwellers, fishermen, and rude hunters. Then came the Bituriges from the north, a people with some idea of industry; and it was a growing city which the Romans took over and worth treating with some care, for it enjoyed the rare joy of paying no taxes. There was much magnificent building, and great roads ran in various directions. Of the buildings there remains a portion of an amphi-theatre, the "Palais Gallien", since the Emperor Gallian is said to have built it. Till the end of the seventeenth century there remained some pillars of a temple. Inscriptions have also survived. Twice Bordeaux, turned Christian, and busy with church-building, was wrecked by those northern hordes, whose virility was too much for the broken and undermined constitution of the Roman Empire. This was the period of the Visigoths (who came, it is said, not south, but west, from Italy), and along the Pyrenees one finds traces of Visigoth building. They faded strangely away; and now it is from the south that the "Moors" pour in, till Charles "the Hammer" beat them at Poitiers. Then came Normans, and then came—we. Three hundred years of English domination in Aquitaine

certainly developed trade and export. But this domination ended with the battle of Castillon-sur-Dordogne, and further struggles of Bordeaux, or for Bordeaux, were among the French themselves. Once at peace Bordeaux developed a great overseas trade, despite her rather remote position in the nook of the Gulf of Gascony. Modern Bordeaux is largely the work of the eighteenth century, and of de Tourny in especial. The Place du Théâtre, looking on the Place des Quinconces, is as fine a bit of modern planning and building as can be found in France.

It is a busy and noisy city—road traffic is rapid and none too easy to avoid, whether you are yourself driving or on foot. One rather troublesome aspect of Bordeaux for ordinary travellers is the variety of its railway stations, though St-Jean takes all the rapid or express services.

Of ancient buildings the crypt under St-Seurin, which is apparently a cemetery-crypt, is one of the oldest after the Roman amphitheatre. But it is not easy to disentangle its history. It rests on Gallo-Roman foundations and contains Gallo-Roman fragments, and it contains sarcophagi older than the crypt, which is dated about the eighth century. The church itself has eleventh- and twelfth-century construction. In the crypt is the late "tomb" of St Fort, supposed to have been a heathen priest who, after conversion, became Bordeaux's first bishop. There is much in a

name, and it is thought that contact with his tomb makes you strong. In May there is a great baby festival, when mothers and nurses bring the infants to touch the tomb.

The Cathedral is also, like St-Seurin, of mixed styles. It has a nave without aisles—this is old, partly Romanesque ; and then comes a vast choir, Gothic and beautiful, but quite out of harmony with its nave. The west end originally joined the ramparts and remains sternly plain ; the transepts, of same date as the choir, have fine façades ; the towers of the north transept have spires, which gives a lop-sided appearance to the building, though the spires are themselves beautiful ones. Not far from the east end stands what would be a very fine isolated tower (Pey-Berland) but that the spire has been shortened. Another detached tower is that of St-Michel, whose spire (rebuilt after a fall) resembles those of the cathedral. The church of Ste-Croix is a fine Romanesque building (with many additions and restorations) ; its façade is as good as any of the famous examples of the period. The church probably goes back to a quite early date ; experts speak of the fifth century, but the façade is of the fourteenth.

Of civic buildings the Clock Tower is a relic of the old town hall, and very dignified it is. Quite fine also, though more stolid, is the Porte du Palais, opening formerly on the ducal residence, occupied by the English kings.

Bordeaux is rightly proud of its Palais de Justice and its Great Theatre, as well as of its Bridge, from which one sees, grouped along the quays in stately array, Bordeaux's movable palaces and houses, the liners; and alongside of them the floating warehouses, or carrying steamers, which help to take away from Bordeaux some part of its enormous output of wine.

Should any readers share my passion for good ironwork, they will find much to admire at Bordeaux. In medieval times (and up to a reasonably recent date) it was convenient to have places shut in as much as possible, so that anyone coming to rob or assassinate you, or after robbing or assassinating you, should at least have a sort of obstacle-race to run in either direction. Houses were enclosed; squares and little districts were enclosed, as we see still in Paris in the little "Cités". Hence much work for the smiths, and much opportunity for the smiths to do and display their best work. In the churches, of course, *grilles* are common; but there is some fine civil and domestic ironwork left at Bordeaux—largely eighteenth century, but also earlier. I say "left" because the Revolution not only disliked exclusiveness but also liked iron and steel for other purposes. The Bourse is worth study; and besides ordinary gates of large houses many good balconies remain and some excellent balustrades The Museum Lalande has a good

(original) one, and it also has fine locks. I advise those who care for these things to examine all door-knockers, at the risk of being run in by the police.

The Bordeaux cooking is famous. I make notes from inner recollections and from M. Curnonsky, apart from whom these things may not be mentioned.

The great dish is lampreys, found in the Dordogne and elsewhere; and lampreys are of the very select number of fish with which one may drink red wine. Usually fish may have white only. Moreover, the lampreys are cooked in red wine also. *Quid plura requiris?* Of fishy things there is an abundance, whether from sea or river. The *alose* is a worthy (and sometimes a large) fish caught in the Garonne and Dordogne: a boat carries out a great net; first comes a hard row upstream and across; then an oarless glide downstream; then a *sauve-qui-peut* rush to the side from which you first started, and then the long pull in of the seine-net. The glint of the sun is on the bobbing corks; the fishermen, even in these days, are reasonably picturesque; nightingales sing loudly on either bank; the poor captives gleam like silver in the bag of the net.

Let not *alose* be confused with *alios*, a sort of pudding-stone dear to the vines of Médoc. The affection of vines for stones, flints, gravels, schists,

chalk is remarkable.[1] Who could have believed that pebbles tasted so nice? But the vine knows, and it finds savours in stones, and good in everything that seems to us hard and unpromising. But let us get back to our roast muttons, for these you will not wholly escape even in the Bordelais or Périgord; but you can turn from them to all sorts of delicious bird-dishes, *purée de bécasse*, *dodine de canard*, and even French mutton is palatable with *cêpes*. Let your grills be grilled over vine-wood—which fetches a tall price—and finish off with St-Émilion macaroons.

Ausonius, native of Bordeaux and singer of vines, deserves a special note. He was academic to the core, and yet not a reserved, but a rather garrulous professor. His colleagues at the University of Bordeaux wrote him a little series of poems; he himself wrote freely on most things (which includes many of his relatives). A true-born Celt, he became a master of Latinity of sufficient renown to be called in as tutor to Gratian at Trèves. Later he became consul. He was a Christian, and one of his poems was "A Prayer". He has left us quite a charming account of how

[1] The Château de Rayne-Vigneau (Bommes) finds precious stones in its subsoil. The Benedictines at Château Carbonnieux are perhaps not far out when they label their white wine (as they are said to) to be exported to some Mahommedan potentate "Mineral Water of Carbonnieux".

he spends a day: his early ablutions, his prayer, his calls, his interview with his cook, his dictation to the shorthand secretary, his lunch party and so on, till he goes to bed, and then he tells us his dreams. His best-known work is his "Moselle", but his more fugitive pieces have a good deal of charm. There are letters to great people, like Symmachus, and good people, like Paulinus of Nola. His chief characteristic, perhaps, is his love for his own Bordeaux and its river. There he was at home. Of Trèves and its splendours—across the Rhine—he does not speak so warmly. So he stands as a true son of Bordeaux and the south; and if he did not salute every vine grown on the Garonne and anticipate every vineyard, we are sure that he was a lover of vines and vineyards and wines, and entertained his friends at the Easter dinner, to which he hurried back from church, with the nearest that his century knew to Margaux and Yquem.

Take an S and turn it wrong way round; and on its under side write *Médoc* in the first bend, *Graves* at the turn, *Sauternais* at the convexity; on the upper side, nothing at the convexity, *Côtes* at the start of the next bend, and *Entre-deux-Mers* (really, Entre-deux-Fleuves) in the concavity, and you have got in your mind's eye the Bordeaux district. The "Deux Mers" remind you that you have to think both of Dordogne and Gironde with

Garonne. Such is the district; pleasantly undulating and even hilly as you mount up the rivers, flat (but not necessarily dull) at the estuaries. There are certain marked and striking physical differences in these parts. *Côtes* are hill-sides; "Entre-deux-Mers" is naturally a strip of river valleys, one sloping southwards, the other northwards, to a ridge in the centre; Sauternais comes just before the river begins to decide to become an estuary, on undulating ground; Graves, as its name shows, has sandy or sandy and pebbly undersoil; the Médoc has a similar soil with a flinty element, and, far from being the sort of sandy desert you may get on an estuary, is broken up by streams and dotted with trees and woods. Now the unity of all these vineyards lies in this; they all "smell" at least a river;[1] the Graves and Sauternais country does not extend far south or west of the Garonne. Moreover, a river of reasonable size seems to help things, for while good wines can be had farther east along Dordogne and Garonne, the best stop short at La Réole, on the Garonne, and (last but not least) Ste-Foy-la-Grande, on the Dordogne. The vines and wines will come up for discussion presently; but it may be noted that Médocs are usually red, and so (contrary to prevailing notions) are Graves; Sauternais (where the grape stays on the vine as long as it may, and is often picked actually grape by grape, at the exact

[1] Here is the great difference from Burgundy.

moment) gives goldens or ambers; the Dordogne yields mostly reds, with a white at Ste-Foy of great mark, and Entre-deux-Mers largely whites. The plan of this book, when dealing with any considerable district, will be to consider place and wine together, but there are certain general characteristics of districts which enable us to tell blindfold a Bordeaux from a Burgundy, or a Côtes from a Côte-Rôtie, and these will come best when we are thinking of the district.

The great difference, then, between Bordeaux and Burgundy districts lies in the size and arrangement of individual vineyards. It is not quite accurate to say vineyards in Bordeaux are large, in Burgundy small. Many of the best Bordeaux vineyards are not large, and for a reason which we shall presently see. It is rather a matter of arrangement of vineyards than of size. In Bordeaux you have your château and your vineyard (unless it be a Clos or Domaine only); château in the vineyard, vineyard round the château. The vineyard is not much broken; in fact it may be quite continuous, and often is. In Burgundy the vineyards under one name are generally made of broken pieces, wherever a footing can be got for the vine. It is the same grape, the same process, the same immediate neighbourhood; but not a continuous, unbroken vineyard. Hence the great—that is, the celebrated—Burgundy vintages are often quite small (and priceless accordingly); one "vineyard",

Corton, a famous name, has been reported as " washed away ".[1] Now it is conceivable, but hardly, that the Margaux or Yquem vineyards should be swept away; but it would require a cataclysm to do it. The Burgundy vineyards are small because vine-growing space is small; the Bordeaux vineyards, with a considerable open stretch of space, are comparatively small (details will come later) because the name covers its own domain only; the land next to this domain is already taken up, and nothing would be gained by amalgamation, since it may easily mean a loss of superlative quality, and quality is all in all; quality rightly brings princely prices, which have really been duly earned both by concentration of effort, personal care, traditionally expert labour, and precision of process. This is all different from our notions. A spirit distilled in our islands, or a cider or ale, gets a local name. Almost at once it is taken up, advertised locally; and if then it succeeds it will constantly become a subject of universal advertisement and pushing. What, then, must happen? A demand is thus created (owing to that mysterious effect which a mere advertisement has upon the vulgar, and the readiness with which the vulgar believe any wholesale statements of the advertiser) and this demand must now be supplied. There is only one way—to buy up elsewhere, and by skilful blending approximate to the original type; but

[1] May 2, 1927.

it is quite certain that the consumer cannot be getting the original quality, save by luck. Hence it is an admirable rule (from this point of view) not to buy advertised goods. Now the Bordeaux châteaux concentrate only on quality and uniformity. Years differ, but the wine is the same wine, not because it is brought to a standard but because it contains that standard inherent in it. Pape Clément will produce Pape Clément because the grape, the soil, the process is Pape Clément, since the very grape, though perhaps the same grape as is grown the other side of the river, has by its association with the soil and treatment of Pape Clément (or whatever the château may be) become something different from its cousin on the other side not only of the river but also of the fence. When one surveys the vineyard of Yquem or of Margaux (I take the obvious names), one is inclined to say, Give me a few thousands and a clever advertising agent and I'll buy up half the territory I can see! To what purpose would it be? Yquem is and must remain Yquem; Margaux, Margaux.

Qualis ab incepto talis servetur ad imum

is their motto.

If, however, you go to your merchant and ask for "Bordeaux", you may get a wine of Bordeaux substratum, with a blend of something (perhaps rather heavy) from elsewhere; both perfectly good healthy wines, and a sound healthy blend; but

not Pape Clément, not Margaux, not Lafitte. Complete security for the purchaser is given by the note "Bottled at the Château". While, however, certain châteaux have, keep, and deserve their extraordinary reputations, the next-door château may often be as good, so far as any ordinary mortal can tell, and an isolated château or vineyard at some distance may, owing to a combination of happy circumstances, produce a wine little below the chief product of a great district. In our country only a rather small number of vintages are known, demanded, and therefore imported. Probably all wines are blended in this sense that the grapes from different parts of the vineyard all combine to make it. A certain number are also definite blends, from different centres, one correcting or supplementing the other, and Burgundies, as we have seen, are often necessarily a blend, in the sense that different little plots or parcels of vines are used in production. But it is now time to give some detailed account of the great Bordeaux wine-field that the wayfarer may know into what sort of country he is going.

Presuming visitors to come usually from Paris I will begin with the Dordogne, since a descent at Libourne is not only possible but saves the last rather weary hour of the journey.

CHAPTER VI

THE DORDOGNE

STARTING, then, at Libourne, quite a good centre in itself, it will clearly be wise to see something of the country quite near about. And at once we are in a great wine-centre, for Pomerol is only a few kilometres away, and though Pomerol is often included under St-Émilion, it is, in reality, a centre of its own, with distinctive features, and deserves recognition as such.

Not that it is a district with any special " shows ". It is an undulating, pleasant stretch of valley land, with an old church here and there (as at La Lande de Pomerol) and covered with vigorous-looking vines. The vineyards are not large, and do not appear much in advertisements. The chief vineyards known to me there are La Domaine de l'Église de Pomerol, and Château Tropchaud—of this latter I know the cellars and the produce, and (though, as readers have been warned, I write rather of the country than the wines) it appears to me unmistakably good.

Pomerol is an ancient place, though its present church is quite modern ; it stands at the edge of a

great stretch of vines, and its tall tower (with short spire) makes a landmark. There were ancient roads here, and the Knights of St John had a commandery here and built the old church. It must be a rich little place, and the various proprietors would seem to pull together well, since a high general standard is maintained, partly owing to the extreme suitability of the soil, which produces a wine between, in style, as it is geographically, the Médoc and St-Émilion. In so small a district it would seem invidious not to mention other vineyards (Châteaux or Clos or Domaine) of Pomerol; du Presbytère, Évangile, l'Église, du Seigneur, Trotanoy, Petrus, Nenin, La Conseillante, du Castel, Latour, Petit-Village, Certan (this château has an ancient appearance—others I saw appeared rather modern in design); and if I do not mention others it is because any wayfarer will find this list long enough to sample.

Those who desire to appear extremely knowing must avow, on tasting Pomerol, that they taste the truffle, or at least that they smell it. Each group of wines has a distinguishing taste, by recognizing which a reputation can soon be built up for a very knowing person.

It was in the Pomerol district that I first became acquainted with the custom of shooting off maroons at looming hailstorms—presumably to bring them down on the other man's vines first. No doubt there is something in this. Then one finds many

strange notions about the action of the moon on plant-growths. But there may be something in this, too; vines, which are the most uncannily sensitive of all things that grow, do really seem to vary by being planted out (or perhaps even grafted) at different phases of the moon.

The great Pomerol wines go on improving with age. Most inexpert people think that all wines do so; but some mature rapidly and then go off; and it would be a great help if labels gave the normal zenith period of each style. From Pomerol, or from Libourne, the hill of Fronsac is always visible, the one height standing up on the Dordogne in this district. It is said to have had the honour of fortification by Charlemagne—which indeed is likely enough. It has an old church (twelfth century) and remains of another. Naturally the slopes of the double hill are precious. The best wines go on improving almost indefinitely. The grapes are cabernet, merlot, malbec; and one vineyard has a château built by Richelieu, who was Duke of Fronsac. In so small a commune there are yet thirty or more different *crus*; those on the "Canon's slope" are especially famous.

Libourne, which deals with wines rather than creates them (though vineyards are, of course, all about) is a very pleasing little town in an excellent situation on the Dordogne where it is met by the Isle. It was sung by Ausonius, whose poems are diligently searched for honourable mentions, and is

famous also as the birthplace of the Black Prince, for there was a Prince of Wales's Palace here. The Place Surchamp has arcades, and a quite good hôtel de ville (of the sixteenth century), but otherwise, when the pretty view of the river meeting has been admired, Libourne does not offer much in mere sight-seeing. From here a tram goes to St-André-de-Cubzac, and a light railway thence to Blaye, by Bourg-sur-Gironde, a picturesque place; Blaye is famous as having been (they say) the burial-place of Roland, and for now supplying red wines of the Côtes, not numerous indeed, but excellent; the chief, no doubt, is that of Plassac, where there is an old chapel and a Roman mosaic. Let Plassac be marked down for lunch.

But now through vineyards after vineyards we must hasten to St-Émilion, though south of Pomerol the St-Émilion country begins at once with Clos Cheval Blanc, which produces a red wine from a considerable variety of soil in no great space. Figeac and others follow, and there you are, right in the midst of them.

St-Émilion's district includes, besides itself, Montagne, Lussac, Puisseguin—only in this sense, that each of these communes may use the name, with the name of the commune prefixed. "St-Émilion," pure and simple, is reserved for its commune only and certain places formerly in the commune, grouped on east and south of St-Émilion itself. Rightly or wrongly, they are said to be the

ST.-ÉMILION

oldest vineyards of France, and were really sung by Ausonius, who had a villa here, in the days when St-Émilion was known as Lucaniac.

It may safely be said that very few towns of France contain so amazing a collection of ruins and curiosities, from quite early times onwards, as does St-Émilion. Its rock church alone would make it a much-frequented spot; its wines alone, were the town dull and flat, would attract tourists from all quarters; but as it is, St-Émilion suffers from an almost unparalleled *embarras de richesses*, and the writer of travel-books knows neither where to begin nor stop. As for the saint himself, he is a pretty legend, a Breton hermit, a miracle-worker. There is even reason to suspect that from the name Semilione, which seems to have authority, the initial letter became detached, and a St Émilione resulted. But for this form of the name one would incline to suppose that someone of the Æmilian *gens* had a hand in the matter; as Perpignan seems to have arisen from the Villa Perpiniana. There is, indeed, some authority for the spelling Émilian.

Whatever the origin of the name, there was some early religious settlement here. The excellent Ausonius, who, if not exactly a devout Christian, at least kept the "Continental Sunday" (Easter Day, anyhow), by worship in the morning and a heavy lunch about midday (as we have learnt from his poems), must have encouraged the building of some sort of church; and the first church of which

we have any record was, in fact, adjoining the site of his villa.

Since the rock on which St-Émilion is built can be cut (not, indeed, without labour), grottos and corridors have been hewn from it, and the great rock church as well, which reminds one of the quarries at Les Baux, which give similar effects, without, however, having been guided by definite purpose. Here, as the early "builders" quarried, they did so of set purpose, and "built" this very wonderful rock church. Of what date it is, who shall say? Certainly before the tenth century; it is attributed to the disciples of the pious but rather doubtful hermit, the "eponymous hero" of the town.

The English, so near at Libourne, were kind to St-Émilion, and the evil John Lackland granted it a charter and encouraged fortification. It became a "strong place", but none the less changed hands now and then. It was the defeat at Castillon-sur-Dordogne which restored the town to France, and Louis XI vied with John Lackland in favours shown to a place which had indeed suffered much during a long and somewhat useless war. Religious wars followed, and St-Émilion suffered anew. No doubt its useful grottos, apart from its splendid position, made it a desirable prize. At any rate, war and pestilence were the lot of St-Émilion, and hardly were these over (there was, in fact, a breathing-space of a hundred years or so, during which

St-Émilion took seriously to literature) when the Revolution and Counter-Revolution broke out, and St-Émilion became a refuge for the Girondins, too soon tracked to their lair and dragged out to perish.

It is a strange survival now. Tourist traffic and its own considerable wine trade make it busy, but it scarcely seems a live place. Its monuments are in various states of decay, save the Collegial Church and the belfry; the Cordeliers' Convent is a most picturesque vineyard centre; the grottos are traps for tourists. But it has a charm beyond that of most of France's medieval towns, and one cannot say more than that. And there are the clarets and the macaroons.

Coming by road from Libourne one enters by the Porte Bourgeoise, with the "Great Wall" on the right—a most effective entrance, with the keep, known as the King's Castle, on the left. This square and buttressed keep stands finely up on a rock, deeply trenched on the outer side. It was built not for, or by, a king, but its erection was the condition on which Louis VIII permitted the walls of the town to remain standing. The market-place is the heart of the old town. On the left is the twelfth- or thirteenth-century Chapel or Oratory of the Trinity, with Gothic windows and a pillared apse. Facing you is the wall of the Rock Church; right above is the belfry, standing on four of the pillars of the Rock Church, in twelfth-century style up to its short spire, which is of the late fourteenth.

The Chapel of the Trinity stands above St-Émilion's Grotto, entered by a worn staircase ; the anchorite's bed, table, and fountain are shown ; and in the fountain young women throw pins ; and this is a petition for happy wedlock within the year. The " Grotto " may perhaps be a baptistery. Another grotto is near the " Hermitage ", which may be an early burial-place or cemetery chapel. The main doorway of the Rock Church is of the thirteenth century ; the carvings represent the Resurrection of the Faithful. The usual entry is by a smaller door and a stone staircase. Visitors will be wise to wear an extra wrap on entering, especially if they are on foot, since the first feeling on entering is one of chill ; the next is of astonishment that the church thus excavated shows a plan and a regularity which gives it a genuine dignity, as of some great basilica. If one imagines it with bright mosaics, paintings, and furniture, one would feel oneself at Ravenna or Rome. As it is—chilly, damp, forsaken, echoing—it causes us to meditate rather on decay than durability ; and that feeling will be deepened if we enter the main door and pass into the Corridor of Tombs which communicate with actual catacombs. As we ascend the hill we go through a charming archway (the Arch of the Chain), and see a pleasing Romanesque window in an adjoining house.

The Jacobin Convent is a very beautiful ruin, overgrown with all sorts of shrubs and creepers, with a Renaissance doorway of the chapel and a

square tower in the garden. These buildings are now a depot for sparkling wines.

We must hurry over other interesting relics: the so-called "Palais Cardinal", the Great Wall (part of a monastery)—both have charming Gothic windows; the Maison Guadet, close by the Wall, famous from Revolution days (here for eight months Girondins were in hiding—Guadet himself was one, but to no purpose). Just so the Girondins, protected by Guadet's sister-in-law, Madame Bouquey, a Nurse Cavell of those days, were dragged at last from their grotto (the schoolmaster has access to this and will show it) and their protectors with them.

The Collegial Church is large and dignified; it is of three distinct styles, as you go from west to east. On the south side are beautiful cloisters, with twin columns; there are some of the Romanesque arches still left. Another beautiful cloister, overgrown with ivy and other plants, is in the old Couvent des Cordeliers; here also the arcades rest on twin columns; and the whole is of wonderful grace and attractiveness. There is a fifteenth-century chapel, beneath which are the cellars of the wines of the Clos.

But we have not yet done. There is the Chapel of the Madeleine with a charnel-house below; the Chapter-Chapel, of the late thirteenth century, now in the hands of the Archæological Society of St-Émilion, and the Commandery, with Romanesque

windows; and there is more yet. Besides all these separate relics there is the wonderful general view over the town. Near by are the curious "Grottes de Ferrand", which seem to have housed a sort of literary academy; they are, in any case, a mere "freak".

At St-Émilion an opportunity occurred to be present at, though not partaker of, a special luncheon given by several wine-growers in honour of one of their number. Though dressed in their best—and perhaps we may warn the wayfarer to avoid St-Émilion on Sundays as a rule—they were clearly humble people who worked their own vineyards, and no doubt worked them well. Each brought a bottle, and there was a very imposing array on the mantelpiece. These were got through in some very correct order, but there was one very magnificent bottle retained to the last and bearing evident signs of hoary antiquity. Much interest was aroused by the careful filling of the glasses, the scientific holding of them—the foot, that is—between thumb and forefinger; the sniffing of the bouquet, the whirling motion, to see how the wine hung (or not) to the glass, the solemn tasting, the look of approval when the wine showed its proper velvet feel and rounded taste on the palate.

The hotel at St-Émilion (by the belfry) was being renovated and rebuilt at our visit; but it was comfortable, the cooking was very good—there is a

special local way of cooking lampreys, which come out quite black with a black sauce—and, the landlord being a musician and composer, music is not lacking.

A mild episode of the visit was the extinguishing of a fire in a chimney, and I give the recipe ; you bring trusses of hay into the street, pour water upon them, and then carry them in and stuff them up the affected chimney. This remedy I purpose to try on the next available occasion.

The moat round the ramparts is partly filled with pretty gardens, and part is used as a drill-ground for the children ; the performance is worth watching.

Here as everywhere people vouched for the antiquity of many of the vines ; they are centenarians and over. If I am right the only sparkling wine is that made in the picturesque old monastery ; the cellars are most interesting, and barrels are running about among the ruins on little tramways.

The great feature of the wines of St-Émilion, which are indeed varied, is perhaps their glorious colour and their slightly sharp taste at the end, which does not displease but stimulates the palate. A comparatively short time in bottle gives them a remarkable delicacy. Some of the vineyards are really old, and so are some of the vines, for the vine will go on producing good grapes for a hundred years, and may during that time be acquiring a

greater power of segregating the right things from the soil. Anyhow, old grapes suit an old town; and there are pre-phylloxera vines, the old French vines, in the vineyards of this district.

To mention every St-Émilion *cru* is impossible. Clearly a few names stand out, but this is not to say others are not as good; and the smaller vineyards, where there are fewer "hands", and consequently some family traditions of gathering and pressing survive, may often be the best. The vineyard of Château Ausone bears a famous name, and the château is said to occupy the site of Ausonius's villa. In any case, this *cru* is *le premier des grands crus*, beyond which you cannot get. Château Belair is thought also to have been part of Ausonius's property. *Respondent natalibus*, it (like Château Ausone itself) answers to its high origin, and, if not *le premier*, is *premier grand cru*. Belair belonged to Robert de Knolles in the English days—he is thought to have received the surrender of the great Du Guesclin, and his descendants remained in France and (now called Canolles) held the vineyard till the Revolution. Other *premier grands* are Canon, Beauséjour, Troplong-Mondot, Curé-Bon-la-Madeleine, and La-Tour-du-Pin-Figeac-Strohl, the names increasing in length as one goes on, and thus forming a pleasant carillon. The last-named is almost on Pomerol territory. Then there is Le Couvent, in the town, nearly surrounding the Château du Roi. Le Couvent is justly proud not

only of its *cru*, which in 1924 was *premier des grands*, but of its macaroons, which in their highest form issued from the Ursulines, whose convent it was.

I note the acreage (in hectares)[1] of some of these vineyards: (Château Margaux has, I think, 90 hectares of vines; Lafite-Rothschild, 70); Clos-St-Émilion, 15; Le Castelot, 7; La Tour Baladoz, 6; De Moulin, 10. So size does not necessarily make for excellence. The output seems to vary between 4 and 4½ *tonneaux* per hectare, or 1¼ *tonneaux* per *journal*.[2]

English visitors will like to know that Château Grand-Corbin probably belonged once to the Black Prince, and that there are on the estate some vestiges of a medieval fortress. The cellars of Château Pavie are cut in the rock.

Excepting such estates as have parts of medieval buildings about them, it must be confessed that most châteaux are not necessarily beautiful. In fact there is a "William-and-Mary", or Georgian farmhouse look, about many, and others are groups of mixed buildings; of this type Château Lassègue became picturesque with its seventeenth-century towers. It is rather sad, however, that the period of "château" building to which many of these houses belong was not a more venturesome or picturesque one.

Attached to St-Émilion are Montagne and

[1] The hectare is equivalent to 2·47 acres.
[2] The *journal* is about 35 acres.

St-Georges-de-Montagne, whose curious, rather forbidding little church is of the twelfth century and has a very fine tower. Montagne also has an old church. The wines of both places are said to have the St-Émilion *cachet*. Of the wines of Lussac and Puisseguin I cannot speak from experience; let the wayfarer take the tram from Libourne and try them. As for ancient churches, the church of St-Martin, not far out of St-Émilion westwards, is of the eleventh century, and stands looking over rows and rows of vines. The church of St-Étienne-de-Lisse, in the St-Émilion commune, has some choir-stalls of an early date.

So unwillingly we leave St-Émilion. All, however, is not lost. Pujols is only a little farther along the Dordogne; Castillon—at which we must halt, just to make sure that we were well and truly beaten by the French in 1453 and drummed out of France—is celebrated also for a good brand; while, as for Bergerac, is it not centre of the famous Pécharmant and the more famous Montbazillac? But on the way, after Castillon, we must get permission to visit the château of Michel Montaigne, a fourteenth-century castle, where the great essayist was born and died. His actual bedroom is shown and other relics. Whether Cyrano de Bergerac ever got to Bergerac I do not know. His name was Savinien de Cyrano Bergerac, or De Bergerac Cyrano; he was a Parisian, born in Paris in 1619, and he anticipated Jules Verne and others in writing

scientific romances; we do not know whether he meant his science seriously or not. At any rate, his "Comic Histories" of the Sun and Moon are good reading. Unless I err, it was he who was original author of the much-quoted line (as from Molière) "Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?" in his *Pédant Joué*, a satire on his tutor. In any case, we must visit Montbazillac, see its castle with its tapestries, and taste its famous white wine on the spot. This also we should have done at Ste-Foy-la-Grande, and either place will make a fine finale to our study of the Dordogne vineyards.

CHAPTER VII

THE GARONNE

NOW we are on the Garonne, or its estuary, the Gironde. North-eastwards stretch the vineyards of Saintonge and Angoumois, whose white grapes are distilled into Cognac ; but here, on the south bank of river and estuary, are wines too precious to distil, some of which are now " champagnized " or " made to fizz ", as are some of the St-Émilion wines also. Magnificent as are the true wines of Champagne, let us never forget that they are from some of the most northerly of vines, and that they must depend more for their excellence on Art, since Nature does not do quite as much for them as in the south. But in the south, where Nature works her hardest, surely it is well to minimize the art. The really great wines of the Garonne and Dordogne remain still wines.

The Médoc seems the most unlikely spot for good wines. A wind-swept peninsula, gravelly and sandy, with few nice, pleasant slopes—that is our first idea. The Médoc land is really largely alluvial, as the splendid pastures, or Jalles, which break up the district, bear witness. The westerly gales are

broken by trees, and are no doubt health-giving. The vine therefore grows and flourishes, loving as it does a gravelly (small gravel or large sand) rooting-ground. In certain wines (Rhône valley, for instance) one is expected to taste flint !

The Médoc vineyards begin quite near the point of the peninsula, at St-Vivien, but it is round about Pauillac that the great vineyards centre. All along this left bank of the Garonne there is ruthless sacrifice of quantity to quality. Moreover, the best wines come from a soil which will not produce quantity. Elsewhere one can coax vines into great abundance, but quality disappears at once. There are no doubt " fancy " prices in the Médoc, but no one can complain of high prices. Médoc wines improve almost infinitely with age ; their chief mark is perhaps bouquet and a ferruginous element (which some people think belongs only to Burgundies). The average production is about 30 hectolitres per hectare, but some vineyards will produce as few as 15.

The southern limit of the Médoc wines is the road which, running from Bordeaux through Blanquefort, branches off to St-Médard, where it meets the Bordeaux–Lacanau road. Over this border-line, on the Bordeaux–Arcachon road, is Pessac, which supplies Haut-Brion—a Graves by locality, by excellence a Médoc.

Bas-Médoc extends from St-Yzans to St-Vivien. So remarkable is the uniform excellence of the

Médoc wines that sixty growths are classed in the first rank.

We will work southwards from St-Vivien, leaving Soulac, a watering-place with much ancient history (or legend) centring round it, and a buried Romanesque church, now dug up and restored. The church of St-Vivien was once fortified, as it well might be in so exposed a position. Lesparre is off our vineyard-map; it lies too far inland to be a great growth. There are remains (a tower) of its old castle, an outpost of the peninsula.

Those who stay at Pauillac will find comfort at the Hôtel de la Marine, but—as so often—must get their luggage as best they can from the station, where—owing to the extreme honesty of the people of Pauillac—they would not trouble to put ours in the *consigne*.

The town is pleasingly situated on the estuary; the "centre of animation" is the quays; and large ships often halt there on the way to, or instead of, Bordeaux. The hosts of the hotel know the vine-growers of the neighbourhood, which makes visiting the vineyards the more pleasant.

The famous Château Lafite-Rothschild is about a couple or three miles from Pauillac. There are big cellars as at Margaux, above-ground; but the famous "wine library" is below-ground, in a basement. You are provided with strips of iron about eighteen inches long, which you hold in your hand

horizontally. On the end is stuck a candle. You pass down a long passage lined on both sides with bins, containing all the wines worth drinking, apparently. It seems to be a sort of wine collection, like a stamp collection, in which completeness is aimed at. I asked what was done with it in the absence of the owner, and they said that portions of it were sent off from time to time—e.g. on the occasion of an important banquet in Bordeaux the baron would give some wine.

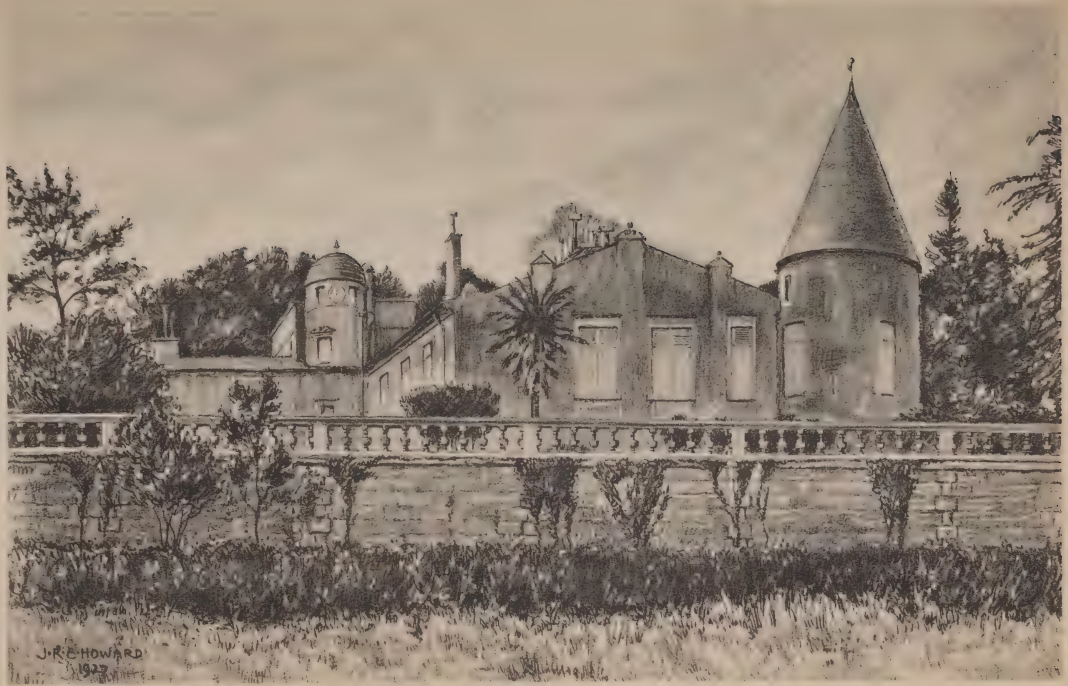
Of another château the owners were said to be absent. This was a most picturesque *château fort*, and we dashed in our car into the main gateway and all round the big courtyard—causing some excitement, for the family were at home after all, and heads appeared at all the windows to see who had come to lunch. However, we dashed out again even more hurriedly than we had entered, and up to the present we have not received notice of any *procès-verbal*.

After this we hastened round the corner, just out of the grounds of the château, and were received most hospitably by the grandparents of *madame* at the inn, who produced a very good bottle of wine and some biscuits, and were, in short, most charming to us. They were a delightful old couple.

St-Estèphe "smells" the river, and here begin our celebrated marks—Cos-d'Estournel, with a rather Chinese-looking château, and its neighbour,

Cos-Labory; Le Crock, with a fine château of eighteenth-century style, and many others. The great centre, however, is Pauillac—a considerable sea-port (I mention again the Grand Hôtel de la Marine, which is not, I think, in the guides). Pauillac is a perfect network of *grands crus*, and possesses the most famous of all, Lafite, with a fine château, with flanking towers, and La Tour, conspicuous by its round, rather squat, domed tower. Next in dignity come Mouton-Rothschild, Pichon-Longueville, with a plain façade, with good flanking towers and high-pitched roofs, and Pichon-Longueville-Lalande. But there are other vineyards little removed from these in excellence. St-Julien follows with the Léovilles, and inland is St-Laurent, where La Tour Carnet, giving its name to the château, built on to it, is a solid erection of the fifteenth century. Lamarque has earlier towers, perhaps of the twelfth century, and a fourteenth-century gate.

There comes a gap of *grands crus* till we reach Soussans and, not far onwards, Margaux. Here as at Pauillac we are in the thick of it; on the south side of Margaux is Cantenac, with several *grands crus*, a pleasing-looking Renaissance-style château (Cantenac-Brown), and the Château d'Issau, a less regular but attractive mass of buildings (Issau is a very old domain) seen across the water. The highest classed vineyard is Château Brane-Cantenac, but Château Palmer is said to run it close.



CHÂTEAU LAFITE-ROTHSCHILD

Margaux "needs no bush". The château itself, replacing an old feudal castle, called Lamothe, is not attractive, but heavy and pompous; and *chais* can never look very beautiful. But the grounds of the château are well laid out, and the vineyard itself is a pleasant one to look at. I got an idea among these châteaux in the Médoc and Sauternes district that not a great deal of labour is employed in the vineyard; that such labour is old and tried; that the skill is largely hereditary; that the labourers did not look as if they belonged to a trade union; and that it is a watchful eye which makes a successful vineyard. The *chais* of Margaux are large; but its vine acreage is only about ninety hectares. The name "Margaux" is—like all the important names—jealously guarded; it includes the Margaux district, of five communes, and small proprietors—who do their own careful cultivating—may use the name of their district. Probably there are excellent wines from these small holdings to be purchased. The vines are strictly of the best kind for the soil; they are the Cabernets, Sauvignon and Franc, the Carmenère, the Petit-Verchot, the Merlot and the Malbec. The average production of the Margaux district is about twenty-five hectolitres per hectare.

Moulis and Listrac are two excellent centres; Moulis is between St-Julien and Margaux, and, as A. H. Clough sang, "Juxtaposition, in short; and what *is* juxtaposition?" Well, juxtaposition

to St-Julien and Margaux should mean something. Listrac is, like Moulis, on the edge of the great vine district, in a plateau of its own; its wines also, though not yet *classés*, are first class by general consent.

The Graves (or gravelly) district picks up the Médoc district at Le Haillan and Eysines. The Graves wines are both red and white, more red than white. One geographical Graves (Haut-Brion) is, as already noted, by its virtue a Médoc. The Graves district is picked up at Cérons and Barsac by the small and extremely select district of Sauternes, which ends with startling suddenness at the Langon-Villandraut railway-line. The Graves country is more undulating, as it gets farther up-stream, than the Médoc. It has some old and picturesque châteaux—the famous wine of the Mission of Haut-Brion is named from and is housed in the dwelling-house of a community founded by St Vincent de Paul. Château Carbonnieux is dignified by its square towers; Château Olivier, at Léognan, is a very fine old feudal castle, picturesque in its isolation in the midst of its vines—it is said to have been visited by the Black Prince. Its wine is a white or amber, as is that of Rochemorin; a good many of the Graves vineyards produce both reds and whites. Château Pape Clément claims that its vineyard was planted by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Bertrand de Goth, afterwards Pope Clement V. Hence we have also Château le Pape,

and Château-Bon-Air-La-Tour-du-Pape, at Mérignac. The Graves country is full of history.

The passage from Graves to Sauternes (like Margaux, Pomerol, St-Émilion, both a place and a district) is swift and easy, but there is a great change. Not only is there a special grape, Sémillon (along with Sauvignon), but there is a special method and very limited production. The special method means very careful gathering, sometimes grape by grape, at a moment when the grape is about over-ripe; in this stage the grape has, and develops, a minute fungus or mould, and thus Nature herself is playing a large and rather unusual part in the production of this unusually delicate wine. The matured grape secretes sugar, and therefore it is of the essence of Sauternes that it is sweet; nor is it any use declaiming against such sweetness, which has its place in wine as in other pleasant things. But it is the tiny fungus which really gives the Sauternes taste.

Sauternes, the district, means Sauternes, Bommes, Barsac, Preignac, Fargues—quite a small district. Barsac we generally keep apart, in our mind's eye, from Sauternes, but its correct title is Barsac, Sauternes. As for correct titles, the utmost care is taken to prevent misuse of these precious and inviolate names; and each vineyard has its own capsule and mark, its own cork-brand, its own label, and its cask or case-brand. It may often happen in this district that only one *tonneau* is

produced per hectare ; so much is all given over to quality.

A very pleasant region, this Sauternes ; much varied and broken up, with good slopes (Ste-Croix-du-Mont is more than a slope) and some fine châteaux. Château Yquem itself is ancient and picturesque, its inner courtyard especially ; near Sauternes itself are ruins of a fine old castle (Budos) of the fourteenth century ; not far off again is Roquetaillade with its row of excellent flanking towers ; there is Cadillac, and on the other side of the river is St-Macaire ; and if you come by train from Bordeaux you should, near Labrède, see—if you have permission—the castle where Montesquieu was born and wrote.

It may seem that I have spoken little of the hospitality of the vineyards. That would be ungrateful and ungracious. One meets nothing but kindness and generosity, and it may be wise to warn wayfarers that, though it is a point of honour to taste whatever years are offered, you need do no more than taste ; that enough is as good as a revel, and that it is quite etiquette to pour back part of your glassful into its correct cask ; that drinking merely for its own sake is a foolish proceeding and futile to boot, as it spoils the delicacy of various flavours ; and that, as you are being offered a taste of an artistic production, you should no more smoke or otherwise dull your palate (and scant the vineyard's courtesy) than wear green glasses when

somebody shows you the family portrait-gallery. In this connexion let me refer to a sprightly work by Miss G. B. Stern, *Bouquet*. She travelled to taste, travelled wisely, and writes pleasingly; but her own confessions make us mistrust her taste and that of her companions. The *apéritif*, even in the form of a high-bred sherry, is barred by those who respect wine; it definitely upsets the palate, as do various edibles and most condiments; nay, even after wine one should drink nothing but good coffee, and, if you will have it, a very delicate brand of Cognac or—perhaps better—Armagnac, which sums up the best in wine flavours. As for the cigarette, before or (horrors!) during the meal, this of course is quite out of all question. It really amounts to this, that the worst enemy of good wine is alcohol, or even the wrong kind of wine, to precede, and that good vintages must not be drunk to quench thirst, which can be done beforehand. Really good wine is an art and a craft, and needs study to appreciate it. Of Sauternes especially this is true. A sweet wine must find an unspoiled palate, if it is to be appreciated. But most inexpert "tasters" muddle their liquor as they would never muddle music, painting, literature. They must not complain if they, in turn, grow muddled.

At Cérons, with Cadillac opposite it, we are just about to enter the country of Sauternes. It is worth crossing the river to Cadillac, a fourteenth-century *bastide*, built on a set plan, after the removal

of the capital here from Benauge near by, the ruins of whose castles are still to be seen. The ramparts of Cadillac are still there, and two fine gates, the Porte de Mer and the Tour de l'Horloge. There is also, opposite the church, a big sixteenth-century castle, now a girls' reformatory. Altogether, for its size, Cadillac is very full of interest. While on this bank we may as well take in Langoiran, where are remains of a fourteenth-century castle and mill; Rions, its fortifications still fairly intact, built on a rock over the river, and Cardan, close to Rions, all three famous for their white wines; and near Cadillac is Loupiac, whose château belonged to Montaigne; and the Castles de Ricaud and Du Cros are both old and picturesque. Nearer St-Macaire is Ste-Croix-du-Mont, a pretty hill, with church on the top, and vineyards sloping down to the road and valley; this has a famous wine, too. Beyond this comes Verdelais, place of celebrated and ancient pilgrimages. The chapel (or church) is highly adorned, and has the famous wooden statue of the Madonna and Child. The story of its discovery by the Countess of Foix is illustrated by a group set up near the miraculous spring, on the way to St-Macaire. On the hill-side is an elaborate Way of the Cross and Calvary.

We must, however, hark back to Sauternes and its district. The country, as already stated, is pleasing. There is a level valley plateau, easy to be surveyed from Ste-Croix-du-Mont; and the various

châteaux, which often stand at the top of an undulating stretch of vines, are pleasant, and, after the Médoc, even homely in appearance ; there are, however, some good buildings among them, Yquem being one of these. There is a "feel" about the Sauternes châteaux absent from larger vineyards—one is made to seem one of the family—and there is an affectionate and well-deserved patting of the barrels I had not noticed elsewhere. At the time I visited the Sauternes district the weeds were still on the vineyards ; they are allowed to grow in winter as a protection for the roots.

The vines of Sauternes are, as we have seen, Sémillon and Sauvignon, but they are grafted on American stocks. The wines can be drunk at various periods of a meal, but by nature they are emphatically dessert wines. It is correct, if desired, to produce them at an early stage, retire them (on ice ; never put ice into any wine), and bring them out again. Sauternes, like most white wines, do not need decanting.

Besides Yquem, Roque-Vigneau has a handsome, though more modest, château ; but, though others are not expecially beautiful, their surroundings embellish them, and there are good trees about them ; while their produce, to the lay mind, is not far below that of the great Yquem in delicacy. For my part, I took somewhat to Château Coutet, Yquem's neighbour.

Langon stands sentinel to the Sauternes district.

There I mention the Hôtel du Lion d'Or, since those given in guides do not seem to be there any longer. Langon's charm is the river, and its bane is its bridges, which spoil nearly all the river views. It is a busy little town, trading strongly in wines, but also doing other kinds of business; with a lively market and quite good shops. An attraction at the hotel was a parrot, which not only whistled but sang, to the great annoyance of the dog, which howled. Over the river is St-Macaire, one of the most charming of medieval towns. The river formerly ran at the foot of the walls and rocks, but now it has shifted a little away. It is thought the town was Roman, and in view of its fine rock this is likely. St Macarius is said to have been a disciple of St Martin, and was sent to evangelize this part of Aquitania. The town was thoroughly English during the early wars; we ought to feel at home there. The inner *cité* is still largely cut off by ramparts and gates. The Porte de Cadillac is a stately one, and there is another through the market-place, which is perhaps the chief feature of St Macaire, being an unusually good and complete example of the old market-places. Its name, in the local tongue, is the Marcadiéu, or Mercato. Gothic arcades surround it; there are beautiful doorways; one beautiful courtyard, of the Maison or Palais des Despanderons, with a curiously shaped door and a tower above it containing the staircase. The church is very imposing and can be seen from

CHÂTEAU YQUEM

far ; it is of the twelfth century, in origin at least. One goes down several steps to enter it, and it is of the " single-nave " pattern and cross-formed (it belonged, or was united to, the Convent of Ste-Croix at Bordeaux). Near the church are the remains of the castle, frowning over the rocks. A very admirable place altogether is St-Macaire, and worthy to be near one of the most admirable of wine districts.

At La Réole we are nearly on the edge of the Entre-deux-Mers district. Just above it is Sauveterre, with gates still left, and parts of the ramparts, and in the square, arcaded houses (some Gothic). La Réole itself is the centre of the wines of Entre-deux-Mers, and owes its name to a monastery or " rule " (*regula*). It is renowned, or should be, for its hôtel de ville, partly of the twelfth century ; it is said to be the oldest town hall in France. The church is old, though not so old, and it is attached to the abbey buildings. In the Mairie and Sous-Préfecture is good ironwork. The castle is of the twelfth century also.

Here I make a big jump up the Garonne—past Agen, the home of plums, and past little centres of good local wines, to Moissac, where the river, famous for wines, turns southwards. At Agen it is met by the Gers, running almost due north from near Montréjeau ; a parallel river, the Baisse, flows through Trie and meets the Garonne farther west,

by Port-Ste-Marie ; both these rivers are " viewed " by many vines, which produce not only good white wines, but also the quintessence of wine known as Armagnac. This district and its produce will be mentioned later on. But at the turn of the river is Moissac, noted both for its wines and for its very wonderful architecture, chiefly for its famous door. In actual fact Moissac is on the Tarn, just before it joins the larger river. Here, on the south side of the church of St-Pierre, is the twelfth-century door, moved from the west. The arch of the doorway is on four columns ; the capitals are ornamented with griffins ; on the sides are three rows of enclosed carvings ; on the right, above, is the Presentation, next the Magi, and below, the Visitation and Annunciation ; on the left are emblematic figures—the Rich Man and Lazarus, and Abraham ; below them, examples of Avarice and Luxury—the Avaricious Man and the Shameless Woman—and, at the foot, figures representing these two vices. Between the doors—which are double—is a pillar with lionesses on the face and figures on the sides. In the tympanum of the triple arch is a particularly elaborate carving, centring about a Christ on the Throne, with the Evangelists' symbols about Him. The twenty-four elders are below. All sorts of ornamental accessories are added ; the elders have instruments and a cup ; there are rat-like animals, rosettes, scallops, ribbons. Some fragments of old sarcophagi have been employed. The whole is

of a richness unusual, even in the most ornate period.

There is, besides, a wonderful cloister, to be mentioned in the same breath with St Trophime of Arles and the Cathedral of Elne. It is of the best Toulouse style; the little columns are of different materials; some parts of the original church have been worked in; and the capitals are of unusual finish. Such, in brief, are the glories of Moissac.

CHAPTER VIII

AUXERRE, CHABLIS, TONNERRE

THE district of Basse-Bourgogne is famous for one well-known name, but both Auxerre and Tonnerre are good centres of wines, chiefly red. The whites are fewer but good; one does not, however, meet them except on special demand in the villages of their origin, since they tend to be bought up by the Parisian *restaurateurs* and merchants. In fact, pursuing local wines in many parts of Burgundy, which lies so handily to travellers from Paris, is rather like trying to buy fish at Brixham or green peas in the pea-fields of Essex. At Tonnerre, for example, I demanded local wines, the red Epineuil,[1] the white Vaumorillon, but was sternly refused anything worth having except very admirable Chablis. One is still, almost as at Paris, at the mercy of a few great names. At Fleys and at Milly, between Chablis and Tonnerre, are admirable white wines which rarely, so far as I could ascertain, were recognized as a separate entity

[1] Other good reds are Olivotes, Perrières, Préaux. [There is another Perrière (singular) in the Côte d'Or.] Joigny has good *vins rouges* and *gris*.

but go in (quite rightly, no doubt) with Chablis. I urge wayfarers, however, to press, undaunted, for these local *crus*, which one ought to be able to sample in their native haunts.

Auxerre is the centre of its little district—little because it is entirely a matter of geology ; and the farmer, who grows the vines, knows well, being a man of the soil, exactly what will grow the vine and what will pay him better with something else. Thus all over Burgundy (Basse and Haute alike) will be found mere patches or streaks of vines, a great contrast to the Bordeaux country and its great vineyard estates. The effect in Burgundy is certainly charming, especially in such villages as lie (like Irancy and Jussy and others) in a little hollow, with vines (planted in wavy lines, about six or seven lines as a rule) all radiating in to the one centre of red roofs crowned by their church tower.

At Auxerre itself there are two good vintages, Chaînette and (rather an odd name) Migraine, of which you should be careful to demand *Première Tête* (*de Cuvée*). As it so happened I arrived at Auxerre with a headache, and found that a hair of the dog that bit me, in the way of a bottle of Migraine, was a good cure.

Round about there are many good *crus*, but as a sample both of the *cru* and of the ordinary Lower Burgundy village I choose Irancy, a pleasant little place with pleasant people, who hunted out for me

the man who spoke English, "English" acquired, if I am not in error, at "Lids", a place much frequented by foreigners in iron or steel businesses. But the chief thing was to visit a small proprietor and get some idea of local methods. In my innocence I asked for the press, but there are few if any fixed presses; the press, on a cart, comes round to your doors, and the juice is run through a little trap-door into the vat in the cellar. Every house has this little trap-door, to serve the same beneficent purpose. If I understood correctly, the grapes were first placed in the casks, and there left to ferment until the time for pressing. This is the *cuvée*—done in rather primitive fashion, it may be. The *foulage*, or first pressing, is done gently.

I was allowed to hold and admire the silver saucer with a handle which all families keep in their cellar as a tasting-cup. A deeper goblet was provided for me. I hope all Auxerre visitors will demand and remain constant to Irancy and Migraine.

Here is an ancient picture of Auxerre:

Belov'd and famous city of Auxerre!
From Paris' self men come to settle there;—
They love thy site majestic, crown'd with towers,
Whose high repute defies the writer's powers.
Good wine thou hast, good water, corn, and bread;
In thee is holy Germain buriéd;
While travellers religious and devout
The church of St-Amatre will seek out;
With other holy reliques thee within
Where stands St-Stephen's and its towers twin;

Then to the mighty castle, tower'd too,
Its clock magnifical therein to view;
And let me not forget thy fountains fair,
Nor yet God's Garth, and all those sleeping there:
There is much silver, yes, and gold likewise;
Merchants may barter well their merchandise;
And many other treasures, which 'twere long
To tell—and splendours which to thee belong;
Thou hast of all good things enough, and more;
And of good wine, not least, an ample store;
Whereof say all men, that no man shall want,
For Auxerre never learn'd good wine to scant.[1]

Auxerre itself is charming. Comparatively quiet, despite its being on an important through road; and with very effective views from the station side of the Yonne. Unfortunately one cannot group the cathedral and St-Germain in a single view, but each separately is very good—the palm for effectiveness possibly being given to St-Germain, whose tower, a very fine Burgundian type, stands apart from the church itself. Beneath the church is a fine crypt; outside is a rather dull cloister, now part of the hospital. The interior of the church is most dignified. The cathedral, like that of Sens, has only one tower completed; like Sens—though not so fine—it is an example of Gothic of this part of France; its chief external charm comes from its red roofs, and from the very deep reliefs over the central door. The apse can only be seen well, except at a distance, by going into the prefect's

[1] Pierre Grognet, *Auxerre in the Sixteenth Century*.

garden, which should be done anyhow, in order to see the very excellent Romanesque building with its charming gallery of double, and now and then engaged, *colonnettes*. This was originally the bishop's promenade, a sort of upper-story cloister.

The position of the cathedral reminds one of that of Auch; but Auxerre gains in that the sides of the hill on which it stands are well wooded. The Yonne below reflects admirably. A pleasure of the river is to watch the barge-craft going and coming—many of these carry their horses or mules aboard in a stable amidships. There are the usual flower-gardens; and on some of the quarter-decks was set what looked at least like a child's coffin, painted white—which at first sight seems to suggest that barge-children do fall overboard and that the body is usually recovered; but the only one I saw open contained oats for the horse, as an extra treat, no doubt, after a good run. The central attraction of the town, since the cathedral and St-Germain stand a little out of it, is the Tour de l'Horloge, a most attractive gateway, with a round tower crowned with good ironwork. Unfortunately it is rather crowded, so that one does not get the best views of it.

It is a strange little crypt at St-Germain; and full of sepulchral inscriptions, which you get to see clearer as you become used to the glimmer of your candle. One such inscription I noted; it was of a

man who always made for Peace ; but not by weak compromise,

UT POSSET PAX ESSE, FUIT FAX SPLENDIDA.

I commend this to our delegates on the League of Nations.

I do not think I ever saw quite as large bread-loaves as at Auxerre. They were circular, and looked like great yellow *couronnes d'immortelles* being borne through the streets, rather than the symbol of life. Little children seemed positively enveloped in them, like the man who has to get inside the large, snail-like trumpet in the orchestra. Sometimes, however, the loaves took the commoner lengthwise form, and then they were indeed the staff of life, as you could use them for a walking-stick or for defence.

Here's a famous incident from the history of the city :

At Auxerre, where the Emperor arrived on the 17th of March, Gamot, the prefect, awaited him at the entrance to the town with the town council and all the people. The fourteenth regiment of the line, under Colonel Bugeaut, presented arms to him. In the great hall of the Prefecture, the Emperor found the busts of the Empress and the King of Rome, and his portrait, on foot, wearing his coronation robes. It was at Auxerre that Marshal Ney rejoined the Emperor. Although the proclamation of Lons-le-Saunier was able to erase the words of Fontainebleau, this interview was not made at all embarrassing for the " Prince of

Moscow". Napoleon put him at his ease as soon as he entered. "Embrace me, dear Marshal", said he, "I am delighted to see you, and I have no need of explanations or justification". Meanwhile Ney thought he ought to excuse his conduct, and with the good taste not to mention Fontainebleau, said that his past and present conduct had ever only been inspired by his patriotism. Then, recovering his self-confidence very quickly, he replied, "Sire, I love you sincerely, but I put my country before everything—before everything! Your Majesty is certain that we shall uphold it because with the aid of justice you can do whatever you want with Frenchmen. But you must no more think of conquests, you must only think of the welfare of France". The Emperor interrupted him by saying that he, too, was a patriot, that he had come back from the isle of Elba solely for furthering the interests of France, and that he would give to the French all that they expected of him. He called Ney "The Bravest of the Brave", and changed the conversation; he asked him about the disposition of his troops and the feeling of the inhabitants of the Jura, the Doubs and Côte d Or. The next day Ney returned to Dijon with orders to lead his troops to Paris via Joigny and Melun. —(HENRY HOUSSAYE, 1815).[1]

From Auxerre it is not far to Chablis, and the route passes through country such as I have already described, with patches of vines radiating down the hill-sides. Chablis itself boasts no glory but a fine church and a small raised pillared market-place, at the back of which are shops—this precise arrange-

[1] From the excellent *Anthology of Burgundy*, by Calmette and Drouot (Laurens, Paris).

THE CATHEDRAL, AUXERRE

ment I have never seen before, though the "rows" of Chester are on a similar principle. At Chablis one lunches or dines well, but, alas! the place has become, in the season, a sort of Southend-on-Sea, and a more noisy lunch I do not wish to hear. Otherwise, every prospect pleases. The cooking (at the Étoile) is excellent, and the draught Chablis which they bring you is excellent, too. The Étoile is a busy place in winter too, with so much road-traffic going through to the Riviera. Altogether, what with the amount consumed by the millionaires on the spot, and what with its enormous export in France and abroad, and what with the niggard earth that will not provide broad acres of the chalky or gritty or even schisty soil which the vine, whose digestion is like that of the ostrich or camel, so much loves—what with all these drawbacks we may well wonder that there is so much Chablis to be had in the world. The cafés and shops in the neighbourhood bear large notices, "Le Véritable Chablis", which of itself tells a tale. You cannot be put off with a "sham" Yquem or Margaux, because you will merely, if you desire the real article, purchase on the spot the sealed and guaranteed article (château-bottled, or "shottled", as Miss Stern puts it). In Burgundy there is little "shottling", because few "châteaux", in the Margaux or Yquem sense; and the Law of Origins cannot apply. None the less, so jealous is the neighbourhood, and rightly so, for its repute, and

so clear on the point of high quality as your only label, that anything like adulteration by the *marchand de ville*—against which there are strict laws everywhere—is not likely. All that may happen—the processes and the pressing being alike in each district—is that you may get a wine from the outskirts of the district which is not as good, or not as strong, as the central commodity ; but you may equally light upon a better one—you may find a Fleys, for example, better than the Chablis of Chablis itself. It just depends on the soil, the season, and the precise maturity of the grape. Thus briefly let me dismiss a great subject.

The next Basse-Bourgogne centre is Tonnerre, so called either from the noise made by the P.L.M. expresses or from the almost noisier drum played by the town-crier when people have lost their umbrellas. It is quite a pleasant little place, and the centre of a very pleasant district, in which the vine is not very conspicuous ; but it is dotted about in clearings from the woods and in the fields, and produces a pleasant and harmless red wine at Épineuil, with one or two good whites. Its district almost reaches up to the head-waters of the Seine, and Les Riceys, famous for their pink vintages, are a stepping-stone from the one watershed to the other.

Besides two fine churches, of which one, St-Pierre, is perched upon a lofty hill, and both yields magnificent views from its own eminence and makes also

itself very striking pictures from below (there is one good view from a dirty yard just to the left of the Fosse, and another from the Place in front of the railway station), Tonnerre possesses two treasures which no tourist should omit to see. One is the magnificent Salle des Malades, built in the late thirteenth century (the actual foundation dates from 1293) by Marguerite de Bourgogne, sister-in-law of St Louis. The hall is built in the old fashion of a hospital dormitory, with a chapel at one end, so that the saints might actually rejoice in their beds; we have a good example, restored, at St. Mary's, Chichester (not a hospital, but an almshouse).[1] The great hall of Tonnerre is a good preparation for seeing and appreciating the great hall at Beaune, which is in full use, with alcove beds all along the sides, and by each one a chair and table, on which is an ancient flagon and platter in pewter. At Beaune is also the chapel at the far end, but curtained off. Both halls have barrel-roofs supported on fine old beams. At Tonnerre they strangely used this hall as a cemetery; one must hope long after its disuse as a hospital. The floor is almost covered with inscriptions, which, so far as one can make out, suggest rather the sisters and the benefactors than the patients. Though the monumental masons of Tonnerre ought to have kept their hands well in, they were, in fact, a little primitive in their inscriptional methods; one has

[1] It was originally founded as a nunnery in 1229.

with much unnecessary labour introduced a cursive capital Q into the word *requiescat*, having evidently boggled at the quite easy inscriptional form of the letter; another gets on nicely till he reaches the last line, which he thus divides:

REQUIES CAT
IN PACE.

But these oddities do not take from the sombre but majestic impression of the great hall. In the chapel is the tomb of the foundress—a modern tomb, or at least a modern reconstruction,[1] but thoroughly dignified and appropriate; the princess is represented as dying, but is held up by one of the sisters of her own foundation, of which she holds in one hand the charter. She did actually die in her hospital in 1308. There is a much more elaborate and pretentious tomb of the Minister of Louis XIV, Louvois, from the Capucins at Paris. An odd little crypt chapel contains a very fine fifteenth-century holy sepulchre, with figures in life-size. Though the treatment of these sepulchres is apt to be rather conventional, they gave such scope for the delineation of emotion that they should always be carefully studied. This one is quite remarkable.

The other jewel of Tonnerre is the washing-place, called the Fosse Dionne. The Fosse is a *douix* or

[1] The original tomb was in bronze, and was destroyed—one wonders why—in 1793.

spring, which throws up a ready-made little river. The spring, of unknown depth—it is said that divers were sent down and failed to find bottom—is surrounded by a ring of solid stone ; but its real joy is the semicircular roof, resting on old beams, which protects the old women at their task. Altogether it appears to me one of the most picturesque sights I have seen, and certainly is quite unique. Naturally one thinks of the great basin of St-Louis at Aix-les-Thermes, now also a washing-place ; but there you have not the same setting. I advise visitors, treading delicately and with many apologies to the washerwomen, to get right into the centre, at the back, and look down the short course of the river, which soon reaches the Armançon. It is a very picturesque, if dirty, bit of Venice in miniature.

There is also a fine Renaissance house at Tonnerre, now the Savings Bank ; and there are ruins of the Abbey of St-Michel, close by. At Tanlay, a few kilometres off, is a very interesting Renaissance château, the more interesting since it survived the Revolution unscathed. The park, through which runs an ornamental canal, is quite charming ; and at the far end of it, or not far thence, are ruins of a Cistercian Abbey (the abbot's house, and part of the convent itself). There is another fine Renaissance château at Ancy-le-Franc, of which one may see the garden, and, on occasion, the interior. This château belonged to Louvois, of

whose tomb I have spoken above. Those who are interested in elliptical mottoes will note that of the Clermont family, the original and present owners: *Si omnes ego non*—"If all others deny thee, yet will not I." A more common motto on buildings is *Nisi Frustra*—"Unless the Lord builds, the workman builds in vain." Readers of Guarini will be specially attracted by the Cabinet "du Pastor Fido", with six pictures illustrating this work. Literary illustrations of this sort are to be met with in France—one thinks of the Don Quixote sets at Cheverney on the Loire and at Aix-en-Provence—and it is a pity that some of them are not, with all due permissions, produced in modern editions.

Another good château is at Montbard, about thirty-five miles from Tonnerre, towards Dijon, made specially famous by the ownership of Buffon, who destroyed, however, most of the old château. The keep and part of another tower are now a museum, and in this latter tower was Buffon's study.

Those who wish to see a restored Cistercian abbey should branch off a short distance to the Abbey of Fontenay, founded by relatives of St Bernard; it has Romanesque cloister, chapter-house, and a good deal more; and shows the entire set of monastic buildings, whose date spans the period from Romanesque to Renaissance.

I do not include Alesia (Alise-Ste-Reine) simply because it needs a book to itself. Those who want to study Mount Auxois must do so *Cæsar* in hand.

Alise has a competitor for the famous last stand of Vercingetorix, but excavations seem to set the matter at rest.[1] Alise is almost as famous for Ste-Reine as for Vercingetorix, and a "Mystery" in her honour is acted each September 7th.

Sens finds a place here not by virtue of any growths of its own, but as a good centre where the wines of Auxerre, Chablis, and Tonnerre can all be got in their highest excellence. But Sens is possessor of the oldest Gothic cathedral in France, with its remarkable treasury, including relics of St. Thomas à Becket, and its unique *officialité*—that is, the great hall of Synod, with other rooms and chambers appertaining. Its façade is made striking by its large windows. Then, as if Sens was determined to outdo itself, there is the archbishop's palace of the early sixteenth century and the so-called "House of Abraham", a building in carved wood of the sixteenth century.

[1] The competitor is Izernore (Izarnodurum), certainly an old Gallic city, near Nantua. It can put up a good case—but that is all that can be said.

CHAPTER IX

DIJON AND THE CÔTE

DIJON is naturally a great centre of the Burgundy district, naturally uniting Basse-Bourgogne with its own centre Auxerre, and Haute-Bourgogne with its own centre at Beaune. By virtue of its position as one of the greatest road and rail radiants in France, almost greater than Lyons, Dijon is the Bordeaux of the Burgundy country. In itself it is most worth a thorough visit; noisy, as are now all the towns of France, and extremely busy, it still retains much of the greatest antiquarian interest. For those who like to study the food which sustains them, Dijon is also of high importance in virtue of its yearly "gastronomic" fair, held early in November, which helps to stabilize, and that at a high level, the famous Burgundy cookery.

It is a very strong place, surrounded by massive walls, situated in the midst of a very pleasant plain, the land of which, fertile and productive, only needs ploughing once to make the seed grow and yields plentiful crops in harvest-time.

In the middle there is the Ouche, a river teeming with fish. To the north there is a rivulet (the Suzon)

which enters through one of the gates, flows under a bridge, and then goes out through another gate. Its placid water flows around the ramparts, and, in front of the town-gate, it hastens on the rapid movement of some mills.

The town has four gates, built at the four cardinal points. The appearance of the walls is embellished by thirty-three towers. The wall, too, is built with great magnificence to a height of twenty feet, afterwards rises less pretentiously as far as the total height of thirty feet, and is fifteen feet thick.

Why such a town does not bear the name of " city " I do not know.

In the neighbourhood valuable springs rise, and to the west the slopes of rich hills, covered with vineyards, rise in tiers. There Falernian wine is made, so noble that the people of the district despise the wine of Ascalon.[1]

Provided that one escapes being run into or run over in Dijon—the reason for this lies not only in the trams, which are troublesome, but in the rather confusing " round-the-mulberry-bush " traffic controls [2]—one can see a great deal of interest, especially perhaps the museum, which ranks very high, if not highest, in the provinces. The Cathedral is a very fine one, and we can only quarrel with it because it replaces the splendid Romanesque abbey church of

[1] Gregory of Tours.

[2] In many of these French towns there are " islands ", not at the natural debouchment of streets but at a tangent. One thinks, therefore, that the traffic is being waved merely left and right, but it is really directed in wide and most disconcerting sweeps.

Abbot William, at which St Bernard and his companions stopped to pray on their way to Cîteaux. The much-damaged crypt of this Romanesque church has been restored. Parts of it may go back to the sixth century. Above it formerly stood the circular Romanesque choir, which lasted up to the Revolution. Next to the cathedral certainly comes, in architectural value (if, indeed, it does not surpass it), the church of Our Lady, with its remarkable façade, looking like a little bit of Venice in Dijon. Certainly its arrangement is unique in Northern Gothic. The porch has three very deep bays, and over these stands out a double row of arcades, the whole divided up by a triple row of figures, with many grotesques among them.[1] This remarkable, but somehow harmonious, structure is crowned by a clock-tower, itself surmounted by some admirable ironwork and by three figures who stand ready to strike on a bell—" Jacks of the Clock ", as Shakespeare calls them. I may warn tourists who do not like being made April fools, that these figures do not function at the half-hours. The interior of the church, as one might not expect from its unusual front, is most harmonious. In the chapel on the right of the choir is a wooden " Black Madonna ", long an object of much reverence to the people of Dijon.

If the front of the church of Our Lady is remarkable Gothic, the front of St-Michael's is the

[1] See Huysman's book, *L'Oblat*.

completest example of a Renaissance church façade in France. We should call it " Jacobean ", and for my own part I find it dull and heavy ; but that does not prevent its being very remarkable and of its kind quite perfect. It was not all built at a single effort ; indeed, it was not completed till 1661. The church has some earlier work, of Pointed style, having been begun in 1499, and is therefore a most interesting example of change, almost sudden change, of architectural fashion.

Not far from the railway station, and easy of access, though there is no tram that way, is the famous Chartreuse of Champmol, or all that remains of it, for on its site is now an asylum. The gate by which you enter has come from the former church ; it is one of the few relics of the Charterhouse, which was adorned by the most celebrated sculptors of the time, under the direction of the art-loving Philip the Bold. When all was standing the Charterhouse must have been, indeed, a wonder of France. In the museum can be seen the tombs of the dukes and the famous retables ; but you chiefly go to Champmol to see one of the most celebrated pieces of sculpture in all France, the so-called " Moses' Well ", which was the base of a Calvary. Those who cannot go to Dijon can see this famous work at the Trocadero, where they can also see the Verzelay porch, and a great many other most beautiful medieval works, in excellent casts. In the Dijon Museum is an admirable small-size

reproduction of the Calvary by Moreau (in the fifth room of the ground floor). The original work is by Claus Sluter and was completed just upon 1400. The statues were formerly coloured, and the real interest in them lies not only in their execution, but in the extreme boldness of their design, for they have all the "humanism" of the Renaissance. Every now and then the Middle Ages startle us with something which in realism and characterization outdoes the best Renaissance work. Such is the wonderful ivory Madonna at Villeneuve-les-Avignon. These are warnings to us of two important facts: first, that the Middle Ages had got the "root of the matter" all along, if only rarely we get it in all its fullness; and secondly, that nothing is more rash than to draw lines and fix dates for literary or artistic developments. In a broad general way we can; but we shall always find many exceptions, which make clear to us that coming events cast, not shadows, but very bright patches of light, before.

The Dijon Museum is housed in the Ducal Palace, of which the tower (La Tour de Bar) was built not long after 1420, and the rest is not much later; but further buildings were added, such as the gallery from the tower to the guard-room, a splendid hall, which now nobly houses the chief treasures of the Museum. On the ground floor are the magnificent kitchens, with their three great chimneys, forming a square, and originally continued in the

line of domestic offices, the line of which can be traced. In the centre of the kitchen vaulting, where the arches meet, was the ventilating chimney. These kitchens alone are worth coming to Dijon to see.

The ground floor of the Museum is largely given over to sculpture, and there are several works by Rude, a native of Dijon; chief among these being his famous Hebe and the Eagle, a delicate work and one of his two latest achievements, showing more grace than power. Besides native artists (themselves of no mean merit) other sculptors are well represented—Coysevox, Houdon, for example; Houdon by his famous bust of Napoleon.

In painting Dijon is unusually strong; the Champmol School has naturally provided a very wonderful nucleus. Early Flemish work is seen in the shutters of the great retable ("Life of Our Lord") by Broederlam of Ypres, and the rather damaged "Adoration of the Shepherds". Practically every Continental School is well represented—the Italian Schools not numerously, but the selection is good. Besides pictures there is a ceiling of Prud'hon, and a dish and little figure by Palissy; an enamel attributed to Cellini, and a sword of the period thought to have belonged to Jeanne d'Arc. Before I leave the pictures, however, let me call especial attention to a portrait of Diane de Poitiers (Room XV) and a wonderful self-portrait of Madame Rude.

As for the Salle des Gardes, it is all a marvel; and for a single room would be hard to surpass in France. The room itself (restored after a fire in 1502) is magnificent; and into it have been drafted from the Chartreuse the wonderful ducal tombs of Philip the Bold and of John-Sans-Fear and Marguerite, his wife. The former is the work of Claus Sluter and his nephew; the latter is inspired by his work, but is by a Spaniard, De la Huerta, and an Avignon sculptor. The tombs are both remarkable for their lavish detail; Sluter's forty little figures, each perfect, and each with its separate characterization, is rivalled by the minuteness of Huerta's designs, and the two tombs can hardly be surpassed even by the trio of Brou, which they anticipate, especially in the elaborate ornamentation of Huerta's tomb. The retables are in gilded wood. The covers of one have the remarkable tempera paintings of Broederlam, of the close of the fourteenth century. The retables themselves are built up of figures representing scenes of Our Lord's Life (the first retable) and Martyrdoms, with St Anthony's Temptation (the second).

There is really no end to the glories of Dijon's Museum; and we are not yet done, since the archæological section (with a separate entrance) is very well worth study. It is to be removed and enlarged, some day. Its most interesting section to many should be the relics from the Temple at (or near) the source of the Seine; the goddess

Sequana is there herself, and there is a boat from the Loue and interesting tombs, among these a tomb of a chief waterman of the Saône, of the Roman epoch.

Those who go to Dijon to seek vintages and find Notre-Dame, St-Jacques, the Cathedral, and the Ducal Palace, may, indeed, seem like Saul seeking asses and finding a kingdom; but the comparison is derogatory to the Dijon *crus*, which are serious and estimable. The Dijonnais is the most northward part of the Côte d'Or, and really should not be considered to belong to it. None the less, the Dijon local brands (Fixin, Fixey, Chenôve) are very good ones. The other sections of Burgundy are the Tournus section (which stands apart from Mâcon), Mâcon and its district, and Beaune, which really means the true Côte d'Or. Under Mâcon are grouped Beaujeu and Moulin-à-Vent—that is, the Beaujolais generally, a by no means despicable district. The country between Dijon and Beaune is, as is probably well known, the great Burgundy country. It is largely a matter of geology, as well as of the right lie of the slopes; but in part of the Côte d'Or itself, and certainly southwards of Beaune, the vines descend down the slopes right into the level plain. Thus in this great district you get few large vineyards, few enclosures; patches of vine mixed up with other produce, and grown by farmers rather than vine-growers in the strict sense. Thus also, where you get everything just right, you may

have an utterly priceless patch, like the hectare and a half of Romanée-Conti—and you cannot get the same elsewhere.

Somehow this way of vine-growing pleases me more than the great vineyards of the Bordeaux country. There is something more personal, more human, about it ; there is more of Man-alone-with-Nature, and less of the Société Anonyme or the Combine. Then—with the utmost respect to the great Bordeaux growths—the wine of Burgundy, which does not necessarily " see the river ", grows in patches, and is won from the grape by simple methods of *foulage* and by the humble travelling press, does, on the whole, seem a finer wine. It is certainly interesting to discover that when you call for an *ordinaire*, even a *grand ordinaire*, they will give you in the hotels a Bordeaux. I did get the local *ordinaires*, but only in the smaller places and by special request. They are consumed on the farms and in the villages, and are not particularly palatable—at least when young. Similarly, the good local *crus* are (as already stated) not too easy to get in the town hotels. Burgundy is near Paris, and these are readily and eagerly bought up, perhaps before the wine is made. These good *crus*, however, you can get locally, and very good too, if you are in the right sort, and that means a low sort, of village inn ; and in such inns, or café-restaurants, I did indeed get some very admirable local wines—Pommard at Pommard, Nuits at Nuits, and so on.

The Côte country is very pleasant, but not very varied. From a small part you can gauge the whole. Vineyards, generally in the open, run one into another, and there is perhaps nothing to tell you that you are passing from a Nuits into a Romanée, except the neighbourhood of Nuits or Vosne itself. The villages, too, are not particularly entrancing, though pleasant and certainly prosperous. As they mostly lie on the flat, with the slopes behind them, there is an absence of the unexpected ; and one does miss the majestic Garonne or Dordogne. This must not deter the tourist. He will go to Beaune, Mâcon, Bourg, anyhow ; and if he has the opportunity of passing through some of the greatest of the world's vineyards, that is all to the good.

Now for some history. The vine was well known in Roman-Gallic times ; and Columella's note on the grape suggests that the Pinot grape was then a favourite. Close upon A.D. 100 came the great "Domitian persecution" ; but the vines were not all uprooted, as he had ordered, and there was a good deal of pardonable murmuring, which perhaps blunted the zeal of the Emperor and his minions. Probus (about 280) caused the vine to be replanted, and Dijon soon became a great vineyard centre.

It was to the monks, however, who so often took the lead in science and commerce, and in whose laboratories and greenhouses experiments could be made, that real advances in viticulture were due.

Eager for the success of their perhaps struggling community, the cellarer (who was really the bursar) found it worth while to investigate the soil, to plant different vines in different soil, to bottle off wines at different periods of fermentation, and to tabulate results. We have seen what remarkable work was done in Champagne by a humble and pious cellarer, gifted with a fine scientific mind. It became natural to endow abbeys with vineyard ground: Vosne, for example, falls to the Abbey of Bèze; Fixey, Pommard, Meursault are mentioned in very early records. A new impulse was given to vine-growing by the Abbey of Cîteaux, vigorous and business-like from the first, whose monks were bound, by the rule of St Benedict, to regular manual labour. The Cistercians paid the greatest attention to their enclosure—since they must live within walls—of Vougeot, and it became a model for the country-side.

Vine-growing methods have not greatly changed, save in spraying. In old days less horse-labour was probably used; now it does not pay to work a vineyard where the horse cannot go. In the Upper Moselle are derelict vine patches, and, indeed, a beautiful hill-side gone to wreck, because of the difficulty of getting sufficient stretches for horse-work.

The manuring of the vineyard I do not know much about. On the Garonne ordinary farm-manure is certainly employed. In the old days

the *marc*[1] itself was used, and may still be, for all I know.

The opening of the vintage was formerly duly proclaimed, and no one might anticipate the opening. The date of opening is now notified by the chief vine-growers in each locality, but without penalties. It is naturally convenient for the villages to work in concert. The main processes have varied little since early times, and the enormous thirteenth-century presses at Clos Vougeot would be thoroughly practicable presses for to-day. The wines of Burgundy being red till you reach Meursault, the red Pinot is chiefly used, and the juice is allowed some contact with the colouring cells of the skins. I do not know how far Burgundy makes white wines of red grapes, but I am inclined to think the Burgundy whites are chiefly from the white Pinot. One gets very pleasant pink wines in the district. I do not think they play any great part in commerce.

The phylloxera, as is well known, did wild work in the last century; but there was also a "black plague" in 1349, which left only a few vines at Pommard untouched. The Church anathematized and exorcized the insects, while encouraging and instructing the peasants to find and destroy their eggs, science and theology thus uniting. The ordinary vineyard processes are cleaning the soil, for the winter; but on the Garonne I have noted vineyards where the weeds were allowed to grow

[1] The grape refuse left after the final pressing.

fairly freely as a protection for the roots, till fear of frosts was over. The soil is cleaned and aired by hoeing in March or April (in Burgundy late frosts are not so much feared as elsewhere, owing to the lie of the hills). When tendrils shoot they are bound up, so that the vine does not catch too much wind. There is a shallow hoeing about May, followed by pruning, the fruit-buds now showing themselves. Much sulphur and sulphate follow; a further hoeing and a further careful pruning. Then there is nothing to do but await the vintage and hope there may be no hail. Hail-cannons are not much used now in Burgundy. In the Bordeaux district one may still hear them popping off. Hail may damage your next crop as well as your present one. The vintage is, of course, carried on by methods centuries old, in baskets of ancient type, and with a complete simplicity of apparatus; the baskets are packed on the two-wheel balanced carts, and are of a shape which allows them to be stacked without damage to the fruit. The test of maturity lies in the pips, and Burgundy does not (like Sauternes) leave its grape beyond the actual moment of ripeness. The best gatherers are not the mere day-labourers, like our hop-pickers and pea-pickers, but those who themselves have vines and understand them, and who are free to go about because of the variety of the vintage season for different localities. The small basketfuls are emptied with care into the larger (double) baskets with which the carts

are stacked, or (more commonly) these double baskets are emptied straight into a large basin upon a cart, standing ready at the end of the row, or just outside the vineyard boundary. At once the fruit is taken to the barn, or wherever the pressing will be done, and the stalks are removed by primitive or modern methods, while the grapes receive a mild mangling which just avoids crushing. If the grapes are white, or red grapes for white wine, pressing follows at once. But Burgundy [1] and the red Bordeaux districts leave their slightly mangled grapes in oak barrels, to begin the process of fermentation before pressing. This does usually begin—according to temperature—quite soon after the arrival of the grapes into the *cuverie*. In a few days the fermentation (which is a vegetable process) is at its height ; in fact is even audible. Now you have a good deal of liquid and a good deal of uncrushed pulp ; here comes in the press (brought, in Burgundy, as a rule, on its cart to the door of your barn or upper-story cellar), which presses more than once the pulpy matter, the liquid from which then is added to the previous liquid, which has been pumped off into other casks. Then fermentation of the juice begins again ; and when this is duly over the cask is closed.

Any tourist who wants to understand the process, much of which, in Burgundy at least, is still

[1] Less, of course, Montrachet and the white Meursault districts.

delightfully primitive, can easily do so by visiting a small vine-grower and seeing his installation, and also looking in at the basket-shops. During the vintage itself they are all too busy for visitors. A great *cuverie* is that of the hospices of Beaune; there you have things on the majestic scale and of the majestic type of Margaux or Yquem.

One great point of interest about the new wine is that it still feels sensitive to the development of the vines of the next year.[1] When the vines flower there runs a sort of shiver through the wine in its casks; when the grapes ripen there is another sympathetic movement. These movements must be watched, since they are, in fact, lesser fermentations, and require special treatment—withdrawals, and "refreshments". At a period, which differs in different vineyards, the wine comes to rest (in Burgundy after about three years), and then it is safe to bottle it off. It was by very careful observation of these natural processes that Dom Pérignon of Hautvillers discovered[2] both how to make white wine from red grapes, and how to catch the wine at a moment of aeration and imprison it for the greater delectation of its future consumers. Many Burgundy wines and some Bordeaux wines are now "champagnized" in the same way—a process on the whole to be regretted; the still wines are so

[1] And wine transported to other hemispheres continues to work by its original time-table!

[2] Or perhaps rediscovered; see above, Chapter II.

good that it seems a pity to "artificialize" them, save in the natural and ancient home of champagnization, and in Saumur, where it seems somehow proper and right. Still, the sparkling wines fetch such a price that one cannot wonder at the process spreading; and Burgundy keeps her sparkling wines red, which adds a sort of special charm.

The Côte d'Or is really two Côtes, of Beaune and of Nuits. The Côte has on its north-west the vineyards of Lower Burgundy; on its south Mâcon and Châlons; on its south-west, by the Rhône, Beaujeu. These attendants have their virtues; but the Côte remains the Côte. The main difference between the Nuits Côte and the Beaune Côte is that the Nuits wines are slow-maturing and have rather more body (and in Burgundy that means a good deal). The good wines (as we have seen) are from Pinots (and, I think, some Chasselas); the Gamays are used only for *ordinaires*. The "grey Pinot" is used for some of the white wines; the "white Pinot" for the best white wines. Sometimes Pinots and the despised Gamays are mixed, in *passe-tous-grains*. So much for introduction. I now give some account of some of the wine-centres; but only of a few, since I found a certain sameness in the villages and in the lie of the vineyards. An interesting point is the proximity of forest-land to some of the Côte-d'Or vineyards. Some people think that this juxtaposition shelters and helps the vines.

The best way to "work" the Côte d'Or is to stay at one or other of the larger places—not necessarily Dijon or Beaune—and walk out to lunch in the various villages. It will take some time, no doubt, to lunch in all of them, but this is not absolutely necessary. Just out from Dijon is Chenôve; it can be reached by the departmental train, if desired, which takes you on to Beaune, but the electric tram is handier, since these departmental trains always start long before breakfast and get you back late for dinner. The tram takes you on to Fixey and Fixin. Chenôve is famous for the Clos du Roi, which was originally the private Clos of the Dukes, and was broken up at the Revolution. It now belongs to some twenty-seven people, being of twenty-seven hectares, and that gives one an idea of the size of the Burgundy holdings; and it is likely that the close personal interest which this involves in almost every little vine-patch is responsible for the excellence of the Burgundy vintages. But, alas! in some sense the glory is departed from Chenôve and even from the famous Clos. M. Rodier, to whose book on the Wines of Burgundy I am much indebted for many of those topographical details to acquire which thoroughly would demand a long residence, tells us with sorrow that the prolific, plain-loving Gamay has invaded even the Clos, and he sings a dirge upon this so grievous decadence. In fact the burden of his work is "Delenda est Gamay", and

I trust all self-respecting wayfarers will, in the Burgundy district, adopt a strong pro-Pinot attitude, and always inquire, before partaking, whether the wine set before them is of Pinot or Gamay origin.[1] The blends (*passe-tous-grains*) are to be tolerated. There are not very many enclosures (*clos*) left in Burgundy, and many which retain the name are enclosed no longer.

Couchey has the remains of its castle and an old cemetery cross; it is no doubt a settlement of great antiquity, as objects dug up there prove. Couchey, alas! forgetful of its high dignity, has gone over holus-bolus to the Gamay faction. It is all very distressing.

Fixey, which has a fine Romanesque church, is really merged in Fixin—at least officially; and they have less than a kilometre between them, and each singly is correctly called Fixin-Fixey, which may be a convenience but does not really seem to help

[1] However the poor Gamay survived the denunciations of the fourteenth century I cannot think. "Lequel vin de gamez est de telle nature qu'il est moult nuisible à créature humaine, mêmement que plusieurs qui au temps passé en ont usé, en ont été infectés de grièves maladies . . . car le dit vin . . . est plein de très grand et horrible amertume et devient tout puant." So let all wayfarers stand warned. (From Philippe-le-Hardi's fulmination of 1397, which let us remember as we stand beside his tomb in Dijon Museum. Citation from M. Camille Rodier, who goes deeply into the antiquities of viticulture in Burgundy.) Besides Pinot and Gamay there is the Aligoté grape, for first-rate wines, and a black grape, rightly called Otellot, which is sometimes mixed with the Gamay.

much. It may, however, be worth pointing out here that the double names of these Côte d'Or villages are due to a desire to incorporate the name of a famous *cru*—thus, Gevrey-Chambertin, Nuits-St-Georges. There is not much Fixey, but Fixin is an important centre of some four hundred people —owing its celebrity not only to having swallowed its little neighbour, but to the Parc Noisot and the memorial to Napoleon, by Rude. Noisot was a devoted Grenadier officer of Napoleon, and might indeed have been inspired by the fervent poem of Heine, " The Two Grenadiers ". He was a friend of Rude, and the result of the friendship was the fine half-recumbent statue of " Napoleon Awaking " —to immortality. There are relics of Napoleon and of Rude in a little museum. The old Grenadier was buried standing up and facing his Emperor. Fixin should on no account be missed ; you will be certain to find lunch there, and a tram to take you back (the tram goes on as far as Gevrey). The Clos de la Perrière belonged formerly to Cîteaux. This is the famous *cuvée* of Fixin. The vineyard on the other side of the wall, Le Chapitre, is not far behind La Perrière.

Brochon has a good modern Renaissance castle, which breaks the horizon nobly. Brochon boasts the Clos de Crébillon, only one-third the size of the tiny " Romanée-Conti ", which is but a precious hectare and a half. But I am anxious to sample at Brochon the wine of the vine-patch known as

"Queue de Hareng", which somehow suggests a Gamay origin.

Gevrey is really an important place, and still has the tower of its thirteenth-century castle, and a bit besides—quite a picturesque group; and near by is a park and a grotto. The two vineyards of Chambertin and Bèze[1] originally belonged to the Chapter of Langres; and local wits have made merry with the name Bèze, which suggests the famous disciple of Calvin. There are other fine vineyards, some reasonably large (Chambertin is 27 hectares, Aux Charmes has 12, and Mazoyères 14, but all are broken up between different owners), and I very much doubt if a Gamay dare show its face in the commune, where even the third *cuvée* is an *ordinaire de prince*. Most certainly lunch at Gevrey (Hôtel Chambertin).

I should pass over Morey, which is nearly swallowed up by Musigny, were it not that Bibulus the Critic would demand—What about Bonnes Mares and Clos de Tart? The Clos belonged to the Bernardines of Tart-le-Haut, and remains justly famous. Bonnes-Mares is only partly in Morey, but it is said to be its better part. There is also the Clos des Lambrays, which belonged to the Abbey of Lieu-Dieu. Cîteaux also possessed part of Morey. One should at least see this pleasant, prosperous little village. I doubt if it is any use trying to

[1] It belonged to the Abbey of Bèze, north-east of Dijon (two towers are left).

lunch there, but you could at least see the ancient press at Clos de Tart, and you would probably get something to eat at Chambolle, behind its sheltering rock, and you could look in at Musigny.

Now we are at Vougeot, famous for its historic Clos, which is said to have been the pioneer of Burgundy vineyards. A monk of Cîteaux noted that the soil seemed right for vines, and liked also the position on a slight slope and with protecting forests near by. The proposal to plant it met with favour from the feudal lords, and gifts of land were made. A cellar and its offices were built. Owing to the distance from Cîteaux itself, the working of the new vineyards was entrusted to lay brothers. The present château was built in 1551. It is rather an odd building, built as it was over and around the ancient cellar. A story has been invented, to account for its architectural peculiarities, that the monk-architect who drew up the design was inordinately proud thereof, and that to humble his pride the abbot caused another monk to revise and " touch up " the plans. The original enclosure had high walls and turrets. Inside the court is the *cuverie*, with its splendid thirteenth-century presses. A very picturesque corner is made by the stables, of which one roof forms a kind of eyebrow to the other. The choicer wines (like those of Romanée-Conti) were never sold, but were used as gifts to kings and great people. The late owner of

the château, M. Bocquet, did a great deal in restoring it, and now one goes through fine panelled rooms and admires the remarkable chimney-pieces. The chapel has also been well restored. Round the outer doors is some excellent Renaissance ornamentation. M. Bocquet was buried in the vineyard near the château. He deserved well of the property ; and it is a great pleasure to-day to see the building well kept and ordered, as the monks left it when the Revolution came and confiscated their property. A part of the original Clos is now put down in white Pinots.

The well-known story, illustrated in art (and it lends itself to illustration), of a French general ordering his troops to present arms to the Clos Vougeot, may be true or not ; but at least it gains verisimilitude if we remember that the order is attributed to Bisson, who was said to be " the best eater and drinker in the French army ". Let us hope that when he so saluted Clos Vougeot he was also bestowing his salute upon the Burgundy kitchens, and all those unseen cooks, of both sexes, who make Burgundy almost as glorious among the copper pans as amid the files of her transcendent vines.

Quite close to Vougeot is Vosne, which has taken into its name the famous vineyard-title of Romanée. The little part of Romanée which belonged to the Prince Conti so lies that it catches the first eastern rays of the sun, and to this and its soil is due its

unapproachable reputation. But there are other great *crus* at Vosne-Romanée, and even its third *cuvée* is said to be of unusual excellence.

From Vosne it is but a step to Nuits-St-Georges, once a little fortress-town on the border of the Franche-Comté.[1] It retains an air of dignity; has a town hall and a park, and at least three hotels, of which one seemed shut and another did not give me the welcome to which I am used in France; I found comfortable accommodation near the station. Nuits makes a capital half-way centre between Dijon and Beaune. It has a thirteenth-century church, and an old clock-tower, and, moreover, a small (and it must be owned rather dingy) river. Nuits (or Nuys, as it should perhaps be) has had a stormy time, and has now settled to the peaceful occupation of producing wines of extremely high quality, even for the Côte. It was at Nuits where, on my praising an omelet, another one at once appeared. They gave me an excellent wine of the humbler order, and a more excellent one of the more exalted class next day.

From Nuits the expedition to Cîteaux is best made; there is also a line of motor-buses from Dijon through Cîteaux to Seurre, with a junction at Pouilly for Beaune. The Cistercians gave me hospitality, according to their rule; a most kind

[1] This neutral territory, after a strange history of semi-independence, was thrown into the Kingdom of France by the Treaty of Lyons (1601).

and welcoming hospitality, which gave a valuable opportunity to learn something of the inside of a Trappist community. Moreover, they were holding great festival over the Feast of the Assumption, and there were a fair number of other guests, while quite a large number of people came, apparently from the village, to the principal services. The visitors are behind a grille, women visitors on the far side of the chapel, which they enter without going through the enclosure of the monastery.

Of all communities the history of Cîteaux is perhaps the most famous. Cluny is before it in date; indeed, it was the splendour of the growing monastery of Cluny which caused St Robert of Molesmes to seek out a " desolate spot " at Cîteaux, and revive, and even intensify, the rule of St Benedict.

It was while an Englishman, Stephen Harding, was abbot, that St Bernard and thirty companions knocked at the gate for admission. It was the severity of Cîteaux which attracted them, and St Bernard, then merely an obscure novice, set a remarkable example of austerity. Then came one of the miracles of the Middle Ages; by the force of sheer holiness St Bernard made monastic life a new thing: Cîteaux became great, founded daughter abbeys (St Bernard became Abbot of Clairvaux), and ultimately counted its descendant communities by the thousand. Cîteaux at its greatest still retained the severity of the rules of

St Benedict and of St Bernard. Even the great abbey church was plain (as is the present chapel), but it contained famous tombs, one of which (of Philip Pot) is now a glory of the Louvre. Of the ancient buildings little remains except a disused chapel and a beautiful fifteenth-century portion of the library.

The history of Cîteaux needs a book in itself. Kings and popes visited the Abbey. St Louis came with his Court, and dismounted at a distance, to show his reverence for the great foundation. Early printing-presses appear from Augsburg; the first books of Burgundy appear at Cîteaux, though it must be noted that the Cistercians, bound by their rule to much manual labour, have not attempted (despite the example of St Bernard, the last of the great "Fathers") to specialize in learning and in book-writing. Whenever we hear the little bell tinkle in a church abroad, or in the streets, when some dying person asks for the viaticum, let us remember that Cîteaux, for greater reverence, began this custom in 1193. Abbots of Cîteaux, like St Bernard when Abbot of Clairvaux, were invited to European councils. Gifts from the Clos de Vougeot were made to popes and emperors.

Here is part of a famous sermon by St Bernard:

You see kinds of upright trees made as candelabras. They are massive, and are worked with unusual skill and not only gleam in the lights which surmount them

but also with the precious stones which decorate them. What is desired, do you think? Is it the repentance of the sinner? Is it the admiration of the spectator? O vanity of vanities! but yet greater folly than vanity! The church glitters on every side, but the poor starve. The walls of the church are covered with gold, the children of the Church are left unclad. The spoils of the wicked serve to fascinate the rich man's eye. The curious satisfy their desire, but the wretched have nothing to eat. Is revering the images of the saints to tread upon and sully the pavement which represents them? Why so much decoration that will only be insulted? Why represent what is trodden upon? Why should so much beauty be constantly soiled with dust? After all, what use is it to the poor, to monks or men who are sincerely religious? Unless you reply to these reproaches with the words of the prophet, "Lord, I love the beauty of Thy house and the vision of Thy glory". I admit it. So let us support this luxury in the Church. If it is hateful to vain and avaricious men, it is not so at all to simple and pious souls.

But in the cloisters, how do these ridiculous monsters, this dreadful beauty and scenes of terrible grandeur, appear to the friars who read there? What do these foul apes, ferocious lions, and these huge centaurs? And these semi-human forms? These spotted tigers, these fighting horsemen and these trumpeters? Here is a body with several heads, there a head with several bodies. On the one hand, a quadruped with a serpent's tail; on the other hand, a quadruped ending like a fish. There a beast has the chest of a horse and the hindquarters of a goat. Here a horned animal has a horse's crupper. There are so many different and various shapes that you would sooner read about on the marble than in the books, and you willingly pass more

time looking at these oddities than thinking of divine law. For the love of God, if you are not ashamed of so much stupidity, at least regret so much money wasted.

And here is Bossuet's account of St Bernard:

In order to counteract the self-indulgence of the world, he used to choose, ordinarily, a place with a damp and foul atmosphere to dwell in so as to become enfeebled rather than ill. He thought that a monk was healthy so long as he was well enough to sing hymns and psalms. He wished that the monks should excite their desire to eat, not by fine foods but by fasting; not by delicious dishes but by working. He slept on the hard ground, but he said that, to sleep there, he induced sleep by watchfulness, by singing psalms at night, and by working hard in the daytime. So that even everyday deeds were done by this man virtuously rather than naturally. What man has ever been able to say, with a clear conscience, as St Paul the Apostle said, "The world was crucified for me and I for the world": "Mihi mundus crucifixus est et ego mundo. . . ."

Certainly he had no body of iron or brass; he was sensitive to physical pain and had a delicate constitution, to show us that it is not our body which fails us but rather courage and faith. To condemn all generations in his person God ordained that his penitence should commence in his tender youth, and that the most decrepit old age never should see it relaxed. You excuse yourselves on the ground of your high position. Bernard was overwhelmed by work, not only that of his own order but of nearly all the Church. He preached, he wrote, he transacted the business of popes and bishops, princes and kings. He negotiated for the great and the

humble, disclosing his tender charity to everyone ; and among so many diverse occupations, he did not mitigate his austere style of living, so that self-indulgence was condemned by all classes and generations through the example of this godly man.[1]

The seventeenth century saw some decadence even in Cîteaux ; but new life came from a reform under the Pope Alexander VIII. The Revolution scattered the community and plundered the abbey ; books of the abbey can be found in libraries (at Dijon, for example), but nothing was allowed to remain, and the abbey buildings themselves were put to all sorts of profane uses. A reformatory was installed by the Society of St Joseph ; but the Germans occupied the buildings in 1870, and the Reformatory never recovered from its then losses. In 1892, however, by the statesmanship and energy of a former officer of the Papal Guards, a union was effected of the different branches of Trappists under the title of " Reformed Cistercians " ; and under this officer, first abbot of the Reform, Cistercians again occupied Cîteaux, and are there to-day. In the Great War the abbey was a great hospital, and, later, a convalescent home. Many of the community were combatants, and military and naval officers are to be found among them. Of the " Reformed Cistercians " with Cîteaux as their mother abbey there are more than fifty houses.

[1] Bossuet, *Sermons*.

The rule is severe. Rising at two o'clock (and sometimes earlier) the Cistercian joins his fellows in the church; Matins, meditation, the conventual Mass (where each gives to other the kiss of peace), all the customary offices, all the little offices of the Blessed Virgin, and, after Compline, the Salve Regina Cœli, make a long day in themselves. But there is much work also to be done; the farms, the kitchens, the gardens, all need labour; four hours are put aside for manual work, as four hours are given to study. The rule of silence is absolute, except for those of the Guest House and Porters' Lodge. Abstinence is rigorous; sleep is on a hard mattress; and there are no extra coverlets. This is not the monastic life as portrayed in popular pictures.

One of my fellow-guests, who knew the monastery well, took me to the cemetery. "Ah," he said, pointing to one of the little crosses (the Fathers and the Brothers are buried facing one another), "I knew him. He entered the community late in life; he endured without a complaint all the severities of the rule; but he died of the cold." I do not moralize in this work on the right or wrong of monastic austerity. I only note that it is a very genuine thing, and certainly I took leave of my most kind hosts (among whom, of course, I only conversed with the Father and Brother of the Guest House) with a very warm feeling of regard and admiration.

So out into the world again; and on, by a circuitous route, among the vineyards, which about this part (away from the Côte) are not very numerous and rather monotonous, to Beaune.

CHAPTER X

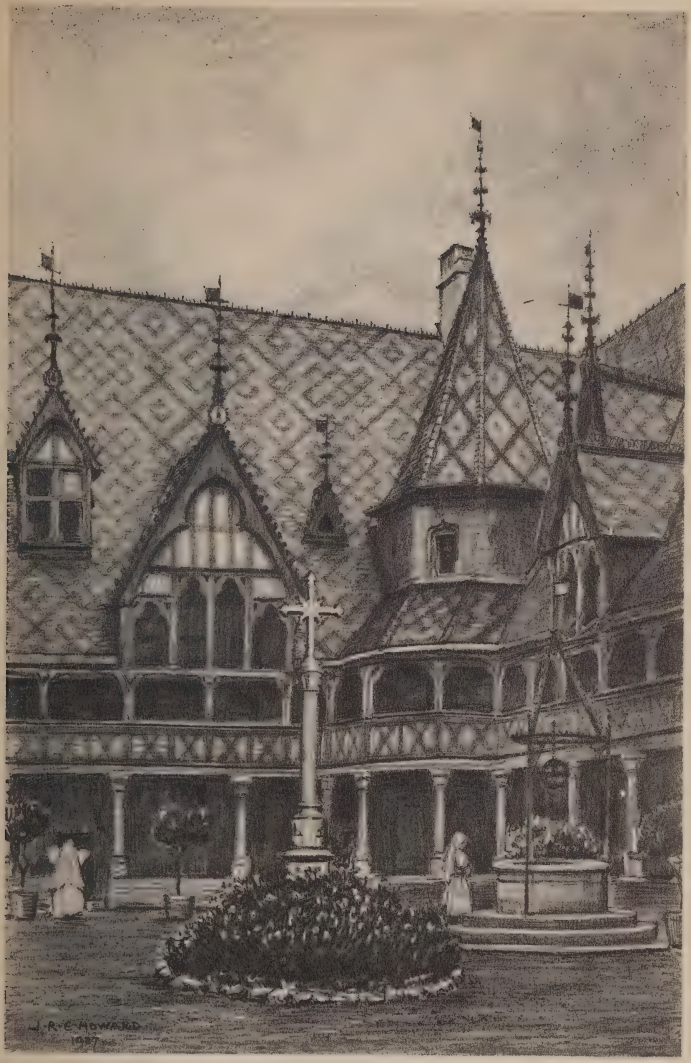
BEAUNE AND MÂCON

THIS is Victor Hugo's account of Beaune and its district :

In all Chalonnais, Beaunais, Dijonais, Romanesque architecture is marvellous. We often find, in a little village, a beautiful Byzantine tower, well worthy of a city. After Chagny, at the edge of the road, I saw a Roman doorway with this inscription : " Good wine and lodging ". Alas ! of yore this very house used to hold out hospitality to friends. At Chagny there is a remarkable Romanesque bell-tower, square, massive, low, squat, and impressive.

Beaune is a charming cluster of Gothic houses amongst the trees. There is a belfry in the town, dating from the fifteenth century, and a handsome nave of the fourteenth, with a porch roofed with slates which serves as a shelter for coaches. The church, with a Romanesque tower, is surmounted by a ridiculous roof, like a cap.

In the coach an old vine-grower explained to me the gathering in of the grapes. Young vine-stock gives a lot of fruit, but of poor quality ; later on fewer, but better ; when old, one or two bunches, but they are excellent. They are dug up then, as the vine-grower finds no profit in them any longer. Thus the vine-stock ripens like a bunch of grapes. You must not cut the grapes during rain or when covered with



L'HÔTEL-DIEU, BEAUNE

dew, for they would perish. You throw away the green fruit, which immediately embitters the wine, the rotten ones which give it a bad flavour, and the dry ones which soak the wine up. So you see there are three injurious elements in a single bunch of grapes, one of which attacks its durability, the second its quality, and the third its quantity.

After Nuits, to the left of the road, there is a long range of hills, low and bare to their summit, topped with vast plateaux, and cut by ravines, both narrow, green and deep. Where each ravine opens out there is a hamlet. Vineyards are everywhere.[1]

Beaune is without any doubt one of the most charming provincial towns of France; and it does no discredit either to France, or to Beaune in general, to say that the charm largely comes from the marked Flemish tone of the place, and centres chiefly round the Hospital. One experiences the same thing elsewhere; King's Lynn, in our own country, pleases us because it looks Dutch; and the grafting in of a Flemish atmosphere quite legitimately adds something to the mere Burgundian element of Beaune. At any rate, the charm of Beaune is undeniable, and those are wrong who think that this resides only in the Hospital.

Beaune has its little river (just beginning), the Bouzaise; it springs forth in the Faubourg of Bouze, in what has been made into a pleasant park. Its old gates are gone, but remains of the ramparts and two round towers are there still. The castle

[1] Victor Hugo, *À Travers la Bourgogne*.

to which these belonged was of the time of Louis XI, a king against whom castles and ramparts were not very much use, since he was half fox and half wild-cat.

The central place of Beaune is the Place Monge, with a statue (by Rude) of Monge giving a geometry lesson (how the Beaune schoolboys must shun this !). In this place are two fine old houses—the Hôtel de la Mare (also called de la Rochepot), with Gothic and Renaissance work, and the Hôtel de Meursault. Looking past the statue of Monge you see the rather heavy fifteenth-century belfry of the old hôtel de ville, surmounted, however, by a graceful cupola. In the new hôtel de ville are some good pictures, including over thirty by Ziem ; and in the library, also housed there, are some good early books and quite a number of manuscripts. The church of Our Lady is very fine, with a rather too large, but very imposing, porch, and a good apse in best twelfth-century style, linked up by flying-buttresses to a tall choir. There is a beautiful little Renaissance chapel on the south side. In the sacristy are wonderful late fourteenth-century tapestries, which are hung about the choir for some of the festivals of Our Lady. The door of the Templars' Chapel (in the suburb of St-Jacques) is good Romanesque.

But if Beaune is rich enough in these antiquities (and I have not attempted to enumerate them all), its chief pride is its famous Hôtel Dieu (one is taught so to call it ; there is a hospice also at

Beaune, the Hospice de la Charité, but as owners of vineyards the title is " Les Hospices de Beaune ").

The origin of this hospital does credit to its epoch. It was a little early, perhaps, for hospital founding on a large scale, but the idea had already been anticipated at Tonnerre by Marguerite of Burgundy. At Beaune in 1441 there was terrible suffering of a kind which we fortunately cannot realize to-day. Famine brought disease, and disease was bringing manifold death. Nicolas Rollin and his wife Guigone talked it over, and after consultation with the Pope endowed the hospital with land and revenues and framed a charter. When they did things in those days they did them well. Nicolas and Guigone were not going to house their poor sick folk in a sort of modern workhouse. Architects and artists were brought from Flanders, and a master-plumber engaged for the leadwork, a master-carpenter for the woodwork, and so on ; Frenchmen these, as I gather, but they certainly must have got some ideas from the Hospital at Valenciennes, whence later came the nursing sisters and their present uniform. Flanders and France between them may well be proud of this most noble achievement. The façade on the street is dignified, the interior court is one of the joys of Europe. The great Salle des Malades is smaller (at least so it seems) than the great hall at Tonnerre, but it is inhabited, with alcove beds along both sides, and each bed with a little table and a chair alongside,

with pewter flagon and platter. While I was there a sister came in to say grace. It was all very moving and picturesque. The chapel is screened off, which seems rather a pity. At Tonnerre I gather it was more open to the hall, as indeed it is at St. Mary's Hospital at Chichester. I regret that I cannot compare the Greyfriars at Coventry, which seems rather similar, having only a partial remembrance of it, but no doubt most hospitals started with a big hall of this kind, quite airy and hygienic, and yet (by the principle of the alcove beds, head to toe all along the line) allowing complete privacy while in bed. The great hall at Beaune is used for convalescents. The little canopy over the outer door of the Hospital is justly admired, and so is the knocker. The court is most beautiful; its cross, its well, its high-pitched roofs—on the opposite side to the entrance are the kitchens, themselves very picturesque. In the ward of St-Hugues the walls and ceiling are painted with pictures of St Hugues, as well as of some of Our Lord's healing miracles (this ornamentation of the ceilings, in a hospital ward, is a noble idea). The reception-room (originally the office) is almost a museum in itself, but there is upstairs a considerable museum, whose greatest treasure is the great polyptych of Roger van der Weyden, to say nothing of admirable tapestries, of which some ("The Life of Jacob") are in the reception-room. The great painting was found, like so many priceless treasures

of the past, in a state of great neglect and decay. Its restoration is almost miraculous. The subject is the " Weighing of Souls " at the Last Judgment. In St-Michael's scale is a good soul and an evil soul (one wonders what would happen if two good, or two evil, souls got in together) ; in the corners those already adjudged are passing to happiness or misery. Beneath the picture is a case with photographs of other works of Der Weyden. These should be compared : it will be seen how he reproduces his models. Nicolas and his son, Guigone and her daughter, are portrayed. Nicolas and Guigone are repeated on the shutters of the retable, hung on the opposite side of the room. There are many lesser treasures ; visitors should look at the little toy models of the hospital (one on the right on entering the museum) showing hospital scenes in the eighteenth century. On either side of the Great Picture, hang ordinary room tapestries ; the word *Seule*, which recurs, is a polite appreciation of Guigone by Nicolas, just as Duke Philip on his marriage took the device *Aultre n'Auray*. One does not in the ordinary visit see the pharmacy (with beautiful Nevers ware), the muniment-room (with admirable archives), or the *cuverie* and its presses.

To these last it is now time to turn : but first we must glance at some of the vineyards just north of Beaune, as Aloxe-Corton (Corton in early 1927 suffered severe damage from an unusually heavy rain-storm). At Pernaut is a famous white wine

(Charlemagne Blanc). A short walk from Beaune is to Pommard, where it is particularly easy to drink the wine of the district, but not so very easy to lunch—I did lunch there, however, with the family in a little café on the left on entering, the cat of which answers to the name of Micheline—this should identify the place; the host was in his shirt-sleeves, a sure sign of good cooking, but it was all quite on the simple side, and quite inexpensive, even including the Pommard.

Whether, in the way of wines, Burgundy can always trump Bordeaux, I am not prepared to say. Let fools contest the point. But certainly if Bordeaux boasts herself in cookery, so does Burgundy.[1] One need only go to the Duke's Kitchen at Dijon and realize what a serious thing Burgundian cookery has always been, and what enlightened patrons it has had. And when Shakespeare talked of "waterish Burgundy", he did not mean that they cooked their haricots, as we do, in water, or indeed committed any of the many improprieties and almost indecencies of English cooking. Nor indeed, when you came to an end of an ancient Burgundian menu, need you have felt at all distressed at the significant title of the two last dishes: "Yssue de table" and

[1] I need hardly say that in the discussion of Bordeaux or of Burgundy cooking I trust to personal experiment, but also to the witty and able works of MM. Curnonsky and Rouff.

" Boutehors ". Indeed, it would be time to depart. The wines, used freely in the cooking, do a great deal in Burgundy as in Bordeaux. A country which can start you off with crayfish or trout, and go on to hares and *grives*, which really understands artichokes, and which is expert in *pâtisseries*, can generally provide at least the surroundings or " trimmings " of a possible meal. In the middle there are the best chickens in France, from Bresse ; or it may be a ham of true Burgundian cure ; and somewhere may come along a few snails. I may as well confess that roast mutton is no better in Burgundy than elsewhere in France—even saddles do not somehow seem themselves—and that I did not quite get into the way of *andouillettes* and Burgundy sausages. A large number of places (small as well as large) have their special delicacies of cookery, and, the fame of these being spread abroad, you may get at Dijon or at Beaune various excellent local dishes, and a good many excellent local cheeses. As soon as you are on the Saône (and Burgundy, despite Shakespeare, is not " waterish " as far as rivers go) you get a sort of fish ragout, in white wine, and eels in a variety of dressings. Do not be afraid, moreover, of curious-looking mushrooms ; they taste good and are harmless.[1]

[1] Charts are exposed, showing the harmless varieties, at convenient places. Only rarely (there was a recent case) do people, for want of verifying, eat the harmful kinds.

Of one thing we may be pretty sure in France, that where one gets good menus at the hotels and restaurants the people are feeding well also. That is, I believe, specially true in Burgundy, where home-cooking (and I have experienced it in humble cottages) is considered unusually good. Thus you do not get the anomaly at Dijon or Beaune, which we get in such a city as London, where (on payment) one may feed well, usually on foreign cooking, and know that in thousands of houses about you the family is partaking of mutton cooked in the way which saves most trouble and so is nastiest, and "waterish" vegetables. The Burgundian's good feeding is reflected in his character; he is really (to use his own word) "exuberant", and that makes it a real pleasure to ramble among his villages.

This note I conclude with an account of the *pauchose* (the fresh-water fish *bouillabaisse* of Burgundy), and a note of some of the good wines whose names are unknown to most travellers, but which yet deserve attention.

Pauchose is made of any river-fish, eels included, and pike certainly—for the Burgundian cook excels with pike. Chop your fish (after first catching them—a *pauchose* should be ordered in advance), and put them into a saucepan with fat, garlic, onions, and white wine. Boil about twenty minutes, and then throw in a mixture of flour and butter. After turning out, chop your fish again, and dish up with butter-pats and garnish with strips of toast.

Here are some local wines worthy of note. I leave the wayfarer to track them down, but I work north to south. In Basse-Bourgogne, among the Chablis, are Vaudésir and Bouguereau. Should you go to see the birthplace of the original Larousse of the dictionaries at Toucy, you will pass Sénan —worth noting. In the Mâcon district, Brouilly, Tubénas, Grimarets, Charnay, Touches ; and in the Beaujolais, Fleurie, Julliènes, Chiroubles. Finally, Burgundy produces a Cognac of her own, called Marc. It is said to be of a high order ; but not, of course, up to the best Cognacs.

From Beaune one easily reaches Savigny, lying just northwards, along the Rhoin—fed not far off by the " Cold Fountain ". There is a castle at Savigny, originally of the fifteenth century, with some good furniture inside. An ancient inscription on a door leading to the castle cellars states all we need know about the admirable Savigny red wines :

LES VINS DE SAVIGNY SONT NOURRISSANS, THÉOLOGIQUES, ET MORBIFUGES.

Now we know.

Should one be very hungry, one can have a snack at Pommard, and lunch, or attempt at lunch, at Volnay, and prove the truth of Volnay proverbs, chiefly

On ne peut être gai
Sans boire de Volnay.

Then, taking Monthelie and Auxey in your stride, you can dine at Meursault, and so complete a perfect day. This is a substantial place, which houses its mayor in an ancient castle, and has a very fine church spire conspicuous on the horizon. The name almost certainly has to do with an ancient wall—Murus Altus perhaps—but was corrupted into suggestions of mice (*muris saltus*). It was, at any rate, a Roman-Gaulish settlement. Part of Meursault belonged to Cîteaux, and its vineyard is very ancient. Part of it is now laid out in Chardenet or white Pinot, and close by is Montrachet, queen among the Burgundy whites, and rival of Yquem in the Gironde.

Santenay finishes the strict Burgundian district, there picked up by the Chalonnais; though strictly the neighbouring village, whose name, Dezize-les-Maranges (still worse when spelt Decize), probably accounts for its being handed over to Chalon, belongs to the Beaunois. Santenay is a substantial little bathing establishment with mineral springs; its chief *cuvée* is Les Gravières.

The great wines of the Chalon district, which begins after Chagny, are Mercurey, Givry, Baxy, and Bourgneuf, Val-d'Or, west and south-west of Chalon itself. These are red, but the Chalon district produces whites also.

The Mâconnais also produces red wines, and it is these we usually associate with Mâcon, but its

best are white, especially Pouilly. On the way to Mâcon from Beaune is Tournus, also a centre for good wine, though often confused with the Mâcon district. The best wines came originally from the vineyards of the abbey; there is a good white wine at Chardonnay, and good reds close about the town.

Tournus is the birthplace of the painter whose pretty, if sometimes insipid, heads hang on most walls, and the museum contains several originals as well as many reproductions. There is Greuze's own portrait of himself. But the chief treasure of Tournus is its magnificent abbey church and the abbey buildings around it. The church dates from the ninth century. One great point about the church and its buildings is that it is nearly all of the one period, and forms a typical example of its period. The architecture is of the solid order, almost forbidding: one of the twin western towers is unfinished; that which survives is of the same style as the transept tower. While nothing is plainer than the round-arched interior, it is all of great massiveness and dignity; and the church has the peculiarity, shared by that of Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer and a few others, of being triple; there is a crypt church, the great church, and a church over the narthex. The nave has aisles. The narthex is almost crypt-like, but the church itself is well lighted by its small windows. On part of the wall between narthex and nave is a fourteenth-century fresco, "The Crucifixion." There are some

curious circular tombstones in the narthex. The nave roof in barrel-vaulting is supported in an unusual way by arches borne on columns springing from the capitals. The apse has five chapels, of which the central chapel is that of St Philibert, with a good modern grille of Tournus make. Six great columns close the choir from the deambulatory. The chapel of Our Lady was built in the fifteenth century, and over the altar is a cedar-wood statue of Our Lady and the Holy Child, known as Notre-Dame-la-Brune, of the twelfth century, but the figures appear older. The chair on which Our Lady is seated is Byzantine in style. The crypt is entered from the apse, and it presents several architectural peculiarities which I will not here detail: its height is remarkable, to begin with. It is dedicated to St Valerian, whose tomb is seen through the arches. The crypt follows the lines of the church above it, and possibly there are remains of the sixth-century walls behind those which one sees. In the south chapel is a twelfth-century fresco.

Above the narthex, and entered from its smaller door, is the third church, reproducing the lines of the narthex itself—a nave and two aisles, parted by four stout pillars. This part of the church was evidently to be used for defence, in case of need. The whole front, in fact, is that of a fortress.

From the upper church can be reached the terrace, between the towers, and on descending to the main

church one can enter the "Alms Chamber", and thence to the cloister, now turned into a chapel.

North of the church are abbey buildings, notably the Gothic chapter-house, the Abbot's house, and the treasury with its tower. Two towers of the ramparts remain and flank the view of the façade. There are other old churches in Tournus—St Valerian and the Madeleine, to say nothing of old houses and streets. There are interesting places in the neighbourhood, at Chapaize, Sennecy, and Mount St-Martin-de-Laives. At Blenot there is a picturesque priory and a grotto (not very easy to strangers, but a guide can be found). A steamer runs from Chalon to Mâcon, and one can reach Tournus in this pleasant way.

Mâcon itself is of no very special interest, save for its unusually good wooden house, of Renaissance date; its sculptured columns and its grotesques show that it was a building of importance. It is rather difficult to get a good view of one side of it from the street, but the corner aspect is very picturesque. There are also the ruins of the cathedral, whose two towers make a landmark round Mâcon; in front of these and their façade is a piece of a cloister and of the narthex. In the remainder of the ruin is a museum, with a fine recumbent statue of Dorothy of Poitiers.

Lamartine must not detain us here, save for his association with Mâcon and Milly Lamartine; but

he has left us an unfading picture of Milly, which, nevertheless, he rather seems to depreciate (for Milly is certainly not a "desert") in comparison with the many more glorious, but less loved, places he had visited.

He was born at Mâcon in October 1790, and after the Revolution his family moved out to Milly. He was a boy with sisters—five, all younger than himself—and a mother to whom he pays many a deserved tribute; since we can see from her own writings how great an influence she must have had upon her son. It was perhaps no wonder that his genius took what we may call a feminine turn; he was dreamy, meditative, romantic—to some extent, even in his prose histories; and though he played an active part in the rather disturbed public life of his day, he loved the life of the country gentleman. He is of interest to us especially as having had to harness his genius, as did Sir Walter Scott, to pay his bills; but the Government of the Second Empire assisted him by a grant. Here is part of his well-known poem on Milly, in which breathes a sincere love of his native country:

Mais il est sur la terre une montagne aride,
Qui ne porte en ses flancs ni bois, ni flot limpide;
Dont par l'effort des ans l'humble sommet miné,
Et sous son propre poids jour par jour incliné,
Dépouillé de son sol fuyant dans les ravines,
Garde à peine un buis sec qui montre ses racines;
Et se couvre partout de rocs prêts à crouler
Que sous son pied léger le chevreau fait rouler.

. . . Il est dans ces déserts un toit rustique et sombre
Que la montagne seule abrite de son ombre,
Et dont les murs, battus par la pluie ou les vents,
Portent leur âge écrit sous la mousse des ans.
Sur le seuil désuni de trois marches de pierre
Le hasard a planté les racines d'un lierre,
Qui, redoublant cent fois ses nœuds entrelacés,
Cache l'affront du temps sous ses bras élancés,
Et, recourbant en arc sa volute rustique,
Fait le seul ornement du champêtre portique.
Un jardin qui descend au revers d'un coteau
Y présente au couchant son sable altéré d'eau . . .
. . . Rien n'y console l'œil de sa prison stérile,
Ni les dômes dorés d'une superbe ville,
Ni le chemin poudreux, ni le fleuve lointain,
Ni les toits blanchissants aux clartés du matin :
Seulement, répandus de distance en distance,
De sauvages abris qu'habite l'indigence,
Le long d'étroits sentiers en désordre semés,
Montrent leur toit de chaume et leurs murs enfumés ;
Où le vieillard, assis au seuil de sa demeure,
Dans son berceau de jonc endort l'enfant qui pleure ;
Enfin un sol sans ombre, et des cieux sans couleur,
Et des vallons sans onde !—Et c'est là qu'est mon cœur !

These lines must be kept in mind by all who make the Lamartine Pilgrimage.

And here is his own prose account :

Leaving the valley of the Saône, dotted in the middle with green meadows, and under the fertile hills of Maçon, and approaching the little town and the ruins of the ancient abbey of Cluny, where Abélard died, you follow a mountainous road across the undulations of ground which begin to appear like the first waves of a

mountainous sea. To the left and right hamlets glisten white in the middle of vineyards. Above the hamlets bare and uncultivated mountains extend in steep and rugged slopes covered in greyish grass, where you notice a few herds like little white dots. All these mountains are crowned by masses of rocks which rise from the ground, and of which the jagged heads, worn by time and wind, have the appearance of the outline of old dismantled castles. Following the road, which winds around the foot of these hills, about two hours' walk from the town, you find on the left a tiny, winding lane, overhung by willows, which descends into the meadows towards a brook where for ever the wheel of a mill is heard churning.

The road winds for a moment under the alders, by the side of the brook, which usurps the road as its bed when the stream is swollen a little by the rains: then you cross the stream by a little bridge and you go upwards by a winding but steep slope towards dilapidated houses, covered with red tiles, which you see clustering together in front of you on a tiny plateau. It is our village. A tower of grey stones, in the shape of a pyramid, rises above seven or eight cottages belonging to peasants. The cobbled road gleams from door to door between the cottages. At the end of the road you come to a door, slightly higher and larger than the others. It belongs to the court at the bottom of which my father's house hides itself.

At Mâcon there is a modern Romanesque church, a very fine piece of architecture. The view over the river is very pleasant, and so is the river itself. The washerwomen's barges are very picturesque.

The library possesses a most precious treasure,

the folio manuscript (in two volumes) of St. Augustine's *Civitas Dei*; to see this some ceremony is necessary.

Mâcon is the starting-point for the Lamartine country, and for Cluny, on the way to which one passes through very pretty, undulating vineyard country. The chief Mâcon vineyards are, for white wines, after Pouilly, Viré, Solutré, Fouissé, Vergisson: at Solutré was a famous prehistoric village, and a skeleton from there is in the museum at the old cathedral of Mâcon; there are at Solutré great deposits of bones (it is reckoned that the bones of some forty-thousand horses have been unearthed). The red wines are Creuse Noire, Chapelle de Guintray, Moulin-à-Vent, Davayé, and others; and from Chasselas comes the famous grape of that name.

Cluny is some twenty-four kilometres from Mâcon; one passes on the way, besides Milly-Lamartine, Berzé, with its "Château des Moines", a Cluny rest-house, and—farther on—its fine feudal castle. Apart from the famous monastery, Cluny is worth visiting for its splendid Romanesque houses, in which it is unusually rich. There are good wooden houses also, a fine old tower, and the two houses on the top of the hill—the one, in which the museum is placed, formerly the Abbot's Palace, and the other, the town hall, formerly the Palais d'Amboise. In the Abbot's Palace is an excellent museum, centring round the Salle Prud'hon, for the great painter was born at Cluny. The two most inter-

esting pieces of sculpture, among an admirable collection, are a capital representing Adam and Eve at the moment of discovery; Eve is quite remarkably delineated, shyly and slyly hiding behind Adam, and clearly rather proud of her transgression; and also a cobbler's sign (in relief) representing the man at his work. The Eve capital is near the end of the room, where is the urn which once contained St Hugh's heart. He was the greatest of the Cluny abbots, and that says a good deal. In the other part of the museum, among all sorts of most interesting exhibits, is the portmanteau in which Cluny used to send its letters and documents to Rome.

The abbey church was the largest church after St Peter's at Rome, and, being all of pure Romanesque origin, must have been magnificent beyond description. We have a fragment left, and the tower, a precious and beautiful relic, and the loss of the rest was the price Cluny and Christendom paid for the French Revolution. At any rate, we are better off at Cluny than at Cîteaux. In the transept spared to us at Cluny is a fifteenth-century chapel (de Bourbon) with statues (of the prophets) still on the walls. Like Margaret of Austria's oratory at Brou, it has a fire-place.

In the garden are the old mill-tower, square and solid, and the flour-barn. The cloisters look out upon a fine façade of the age of Louis XV. The outer façade of the abbey buildings, the part known

as the Palace of Pope Gelasius, is regular, but quite dignified, fifteenth-century Gothic. Cluny (like Cîteaux) had three popes. Outside we find the remains of the two towers of the narthex of the church—one known as the Tour des Archives, the other the Tour de la Justice.

The whole time devoted to Cluny was of unbroken and intense interest. What will most remain in my mind I do not know; whether the capitals of the statuary museum, the wonderful old houses, or the massive fragment (how tiny a fragment it really is!) of the great abbey church; but I am inclined to think I shall never forget what was evidently produced as a great and special delicacy at lunch—the strangest sausage, whether for appearance or flavour, that I have ever seen or tasted (and, may I add, smelt?).

But I advise everyone to risk medieval sausages and lunch at Cluny, because the visits to the abbey cease during the sacred hours of the meal. These visits are at fixed hours; it is irritating to wait long, so it is best after—or well before—lunch to make for the abbey, and, if time is to be put in, to put it in at the museum.

Abélard was in refuge at Cluny for a time in 1140 or thereabouts, and the abbot of Cluny at the time was large-hearted man enough to reconcile the reformer to the Pope, and get him a surer refuge at St-Marcel-les-Chalon, a dependence of Cluny, where Abélard lived his last years and died in peace;

thence his remains, at the request of the doubly widowed Héloïse, were sent to the Paraclet.

I advise wayfarers to follow on the Cluny road to Paray-le-Monial, where the cult of the Sacred Heart took its origin, as the results of visions seen by Marguerite-Marie Alacoque. Paray is now the greatest pilgrimage place in France after Lourdes. The church is Clunysian Romanesque, of the twelfth century.

It is also easy from Mâcon to make for the pretty and interesting Beaujolais district, and visit, among other places there, Ars, famous for its saintly *curé*.

As Beaujolais does not always get its due appreciation, I note here its good *crus*—Fleurie, Brouilly, Chènes, Morgan, Clos de la Grande Charton à Regnié, Chiroubles, Juliènes, Emeringes, Lantignié, Quincié, Jullié, St-Luger; a good beginning for the Rhône valley, which the Beaujolais district links to the Burgundy district.

CHAPTER XI

BOURG AND BROU

BOURG, while a busy and active modern town, does not forget that it is the centre of Bresse, which was a self-contained district retaining many old customs and a certain amount of country picturesqueness. A good deal of this has gone. The girls of Bresse are now giving the world as extensive a view of their ankles as other girls, and are not going to make guys of themselves in the curious flower-pot headgear peculiar, in France at least, to Bresse; and the old men only bring out their almost equally astounding top-hats when there is some great show toward. So far, then, as revival of the ancient costumes go, the city fathers of Bourg may plead in vain. But they do their best. They hold now and then local fêtes, when the old costumes and the old hurdy-gurdies flaunt themselves once more; and they have arranged a quite excellent folk museum in the old convent of Brou, the galleries of whose cloisters have had, it is true, to be closed in for the purpose.

This is one of the best, and best arranged, local

museums I have met. The Augustinians, brought in to serve, and to take care of, the new church, had a monastery built for them partly on the site of the Benedictine priory. On the north side were arranged "lodgings" for Marguerite herself, but she never used them. In this building are the exhibits.

The pictures form really a very good collection for a provincial town. There is a characteristic Millet—in fact, but that it is very difficult to get the light right for it, the picture strikes one as a very good Millet. There are Flemish works (chiefly the St Jerome triptych; it may have been touched up locally) and a Guido Reni.

But what is most interesting is of local origin. In the sculpture, housed in the refectory, there is a remarkably realistic and yet emotional "Christ in the Tomb" from the Cordeliers at Bourg. It is one of those many mid-fifteenth-century works whose humanism anticipates the Renaissance. There is a statue from the old Mâcon gate, and other sculptures and reliefs—not all of local origin, though nearly all of local interest.

The furniture is excellent and characteristic, especially two *armoires*, probably of local work. More famous is the credence or side-table; if this is of Bresse, it shows an extremely high artistic level in the Bressan workshops. From this magnificent furniture one passes to the more humble, but none the less interesting, furnishings of the

cottages. Chief perhaps is the *archebanc*, a settle of Bressan type, with a little hole in the seat for the distaff to stand. Bressan cradles are simple; their fireside ironwork is quite good; and their agricultural implements are of special interest (note, on the left of the fire-place, the great horn to call the farm-workers in to dinner). But what must rivet the attention of the folklorist are the *ténèbres*. These are clubs, made up of different pieces bound together and solid-looking enough. In some strange and mysterious way (I presume through some folk-etymology) they became connected with the *ténèbres* or shadows of Good Friday, which Easter breaks and scatters. These clubs were taken to the church on Good Friday and blessed; why blessed I cannot see. As symbols of the shadows of the tomb they should have rather received a cursing. Anyhow, "blessed" [1] they were, and then were taken and banged on a stone, till they broke and splintered. Apparently some particular stones were so used; for where the stone was not to be had the *ténèbre* was broken on the threshold of the church. Pieces were distributed to the bystanders, which they kept till next year; and a new *ténèbre* was put together to take the place of the old one. It is altogether a most puzzling business. I

[1] One thinks of the Wicked Uncle in the *Babes in the Wood*: "Bless you, my children!" (aside: "You know what I mean!").

could get no local explanation; only the above account.[1]

Upstairs are photographs of recent Bressan revivals and in cases (almost too crowded) are local costumes, of which the babies' caps are most charming, and the women's flower-pot hats the oddest, a hat thought to be perhaps Spanish in origin. The men wore either a top-hat of Gargantuan dimensions or a pirate's night-cap.

This Bresse hat, with its tall flower-pot erection in the middle, may possibly have a very ancient origin. We find certain gods and goddesses carrying on their heads a *modius* or bushel-measure—no doubt the symbol of plenty, like the cornucopia. Not only does Serapis thus wear a "bushel", but also the moon-goddess, sitting beside the sun-god, wears her *modius* as a set-off to his solar rays (a picture is given in A. B. Cook's *Zeus*, vol. i, p. 188, note 4). A rather similar erection was worn by the Minoan women of Crete. It is too much to suggest, even in these days of wild guesses at "origins",

[1] It is possible that these *ténèbres* represent either the winter logs, no longer required for burning when the springtime comes, or the torches no longer required for lighting. The appearance of the *ténèbre* does rather suggest a torch, as well as its composite structure; and the breaking of the *ténèbre* on the stone may suggest perhaps the action of beating out a torch. In any case, the custom must be very ancient, and odd confusions have certainly arisen. Clubs have often been used to expel evil spirits; just possibly this may be the explanation.

that the Bresse hats come down from the moon-goddess's bushel-measure. But the flower-pot erection may very easily have been even larger than one now finds it, and the Bresse hat may have served the practical purpose of shading from the sun and accommodating the market purchases. Whether cucumbers and so on were gracefully grouped round the brim I do not know; if so, the effect must have been like a harvest-festival decoration.

The simplicity and yet cunning of the Bressans may be gathered by this extract:

M. Bouveyron gave the opinion that they ought to take me to see a doctor, and they at once asked him to go and find our cousin, Ferdinand Game, but he was just then on a journey. Then my father determined to conduct me to Bourg on the following Wednesday. He really had to deliver, on that day, a dozen sacks of white maize which he had sold to Meli Sulpice, the miller of the Pont-du-Jugnon, whose acquaintance he had made at Chevignat one Sunday when he had gone to dine with his friend, Marie Denod.

Meli was to receive the grain in the yard of Merle-le-Rabottu, the innkeeper of the Faubourg du Jura, so that my father need not trouble to put it on sale at La Grenette.

The rumour soon spread through the district that I was going to be taken to a doctor of Bourg, and it was not lightly discussed, because a journey to the capital of Bresse was then quite an event for people of such a district as ours.

Our friend Vulin, the carpenter, who was known in

the village for his odd ideas and weird stories, came one day to do a repair to one of our doors, and spoke a few words about it to my father, while drinking the dram of "heather-wine" that he particularly appreciated.

"So, Marie," said he, "you are going to take your boy Laurence to Bourg. May I ask, without appearing too inquisitive, whom you are going to consult?" My father answered: "Indeed, I don't know at all. M. Bouveyron, who used to know all the wisest townsfolk, recommended Brevet or Dupré to me, but there is also the Spaniard Hernandez, who, you must know, is famous for his cures. I am quite undecided." Vulin said: "I don't deny that those are all good doctors. But if I were in your place, do you know whom I would consult?"

"No."

"Well, Blanqui, the veterinary surgeon."

"A vet.! You are mad! Do you take my son for a kid or a lamb?"

"No, of course not—I have perfectly good reasons, and you will understand them. To begin with, don't forget that I tell you this—namely, that a vet. is wiser than a doctor."[1]

"Well, why?"

"Let us suppose, although it is not so, that I have pains in my chest. I go and see the doctor and I tell him, pointing out for him the place where the pain is, that I am in pain there, and when I walk I feel a lump which does this, then that. Excellent! If the doctor is not too much of a fool, he will quickly find out what is wrong with you, and, really, it is not very difficult. But now take the case of an ox, which, for

[1] Sixty years ago this opinion was generally held by countrymen in Bresse.

instance, has caught a chill and developed pleurisy. You know that there is some impediment which sticks in the lungs, I believe. Then how do you expect that the ox should point out, by some sign or other, that it has an intense pain in its left or right side? So it is necessary, you quite understand, to have a wonderful practitioner to find out where the malady is situated, and of what kind it is. And that is why a vet. is better informed and wiser than a doctor." [1]

With Bourg and Brou we are at an end of the Burgundy wine district, which here runs east and south into Savoy. Seyssel produces good, sparkling white wines. There are also good wines from the Bugey districts. Westwards from Mâcon, as we have seen, one reaches, through the Lamartine and Cluny country, Beaujeu and Belleville, centre of the Beaujolais, towards the Rhône.

Bourg must suffer in one way, if it gains in another, by the proximity of Brou. They are, indeed, practically one town. Still, if Bourg cannot boast a church like Brou's, it plumes itself, and rightly, on its breed of the domestic fowl, beside which Rhode Islands and Buff Orpingtons must hide their heads in the dust. The market is on Wednesdays.

Bourg is not far from the beginnings of the Jura hills, and has its river, the Reyssouze. It has not many antiquities; some excellent wooden houses (three together), rather hidden and difficult to see

[1] *Souvenirs d'un Paysan du Revermont.*

to advantage, and a church with a Renaissance front, containing some treasures (the remains of an early sixteenth-century retable, for instance, and a stone group of St Crispin and St Crispian). The ancient market-halls, very large ones, have disappeared.

My own ideas of the church of Brou were much coloured through having had to render into elegiac verse very considerable portions of Matthew Arnold's poem so entitled. I remember envying the facility of a contemporary schoolboy—a Rugbeian, I think—who rendered

Harebells flower in the nave

by

Floret campanula rotundifloria navi,

the last word in exactitude of translation. I do not think harebells ever flowered in the nave; Matthew Arnold's history and topography are hazy (it is an early poem), and he is only concerned to emphasize the idea of a beautiful and princely monument of devotion.

Now for the mere facts, stripped of harebells and poetic licence. Marguerite of Bourbon, in 1480, vowed a Benedictine monastery at Brou should her husband, Philip of Bresse, recover from a hunting accident (a broken arm). He did recover, but before the monastery was built their son, Philibert the Handsome, died suddenly from some

after-effect of hunting. His widow, one who had suffered much, Marguerite of Austria, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian, took over the vow of her mother-in-law. It does not seem that any building had yet been done; that is, we must discard the harebell. Amid grave European troubles, Marguerite came to Bourg, chose her men and gave her orders, only substituting the Augustinians for the Benedictines. Called off to the Low Countries, Marguerite did not forget Brou, and called in Jehan Perreal, the painter, and Michael Colombe, the great sculptor. But something went wrong (Colombe was getting old), and Marguerite sent down a Flemish architect, Van Boghem, and, later on, a Flemish sculptor, Conrad Meit. Marguerite of Austria did not see her church consecrated. She died in 1530, and the church was consecrated in 1532, her own tomb being placed in the choir (not the nave, as in Arnold's poem) in June of that year. The church suffered from its speedy building (under twenty years), and the Augustinians had to yield their place to other Augustinians who did what they could for their precious and costly heritage. The Revolution spared the church, though not entirely; a citizen, Riboud, saved it from sale. It is now under the care of the Ministère des Beaux Arts.

The façade is not as originally planned, and is rather unworthy. Seen from the east end, however, the church is a splendid pile. Over the tower was an Imperial crown, destroyed at the Revolution.

But its interior is of wonderful perfection. One would like to think the screen away, but the screen is a necessary part of a church whose choir is also a mausoleum, besides being necessary to enclose the monks at their offices, in which they were to pray for the Royal foundress. The church has that beautiful symmetry and harmony which belongs to buildings built nearly all at a stretch ; one thinks of St-Ouen, at Rouen, of Salisbury Cathedral, and so on ; the Gothic is late-Gothic, Gothic just at its close but not debased ; and we must be glad that the harebell did not flower, since that would have meant a church already designed in older and more conventional Gothic. The glorious luminosity of Gothic is all there, the spring of it ; only the arch is flattening a little, and the triforium is but a gallery. It is not slender Gothic, of what we call the Early-English type—it is solid ; but it is utterly magnificent from door to lancet-window. A very interesting feature (we see a similar one at Cluny and elsewhere) is the Foundress's oratory ;[1] a little recess with large fire-place, and an opening on to the altar of the Seven Joys, in the " Chapel of Marguerite ", adorned by Van Boghem with beautiful architectural effects and decorations and also with windows of unusual richness. The retable of the Seven Joys is beyond description in print ; each scene is a jewel, and of the figures,

[1] There is also an upper one, level with the screen, by which Marguerite was to have reached it.

manifestly Flemish, each outdoes its neighbour. The little angels and other ornamental figurines are perhaps later than the retable itself; and the skilled observer can see the Renaissance already showing itself in their treatment. In the chapel of Laurent de Gorrevod, behind the oratory, was to have been placed a retable of the Passion. The original high altar is in this chapel. These chapels and oratories are reproduced symmetrically on the south side. Marguerite of Austria's tomb divides her chapel from the choir. The tomb itself is rather restrained, as compared with the other two, but the canopy is astonishingly rich, and, one might say, rather heavy for its supports. The little figures are entrancing. To the right, one holds up her outer skirt; below, on the inner garment, hangs a knotted cord—the figure is evidently symbolic. There are two figures of Marguerite herself, in life and in death. Both are most dignified; the upper figure is proud and imperial.

The tomb of Marguerite de Bourbon has but a single recumbent statue. It is the simplest of the three, and not for that the least interesting. Marguerite de Bourbon lies in a niche in the wall-thickness; round about the tomb, and on its front, are figures from the wonderful studio which Meit set up in Brou. There are four remarkable peasant-mourners, clumsy and graceful at the same moment—quite an incredible effect, on paper. There are many things in these tombs that the Greeks

themselves could hardly have achieved. The central tomb, of Philibert, could have no canopy, which would have blocked the view of the high altar overmuch; instead, there are grouped round the upper recumbent figure (for Philibert also is portrayed both quick and dead) six cherubs, in touching attitudes of grief. The upper slab is supported by niched columns containing saints and virtues; the most beautiful, to my mind, is the easternmost figure looking towards the recess of Marguerite de Bourbon; but the turbaned "virtue" (what virtue, we wonder?—a curious, shy figure, with an odd pout, rather undressed above and very much overdressed below, and formerly carrying a "Horn of Roland", might mean almost anything) is generally the favourite. I cannot help suspecting she may be a very Flemish St Barbara.[1] The saints trampling on dragons on Philibert's and Marguerite of Bourbon's tombs are not St Marthas with their tarasques, but St Marguerites. The one on Philibert's tomb is said to be Italian.

The stalls are to be mentioned in one breath with those of Amiens, Auch, and St Bertrand de Comminges; one can say no more. The glass has lost by damage from hail (the north transept window) and by simple disappearance (a Resurrec-

[1] Or is she perhaps a "Wise Bridesmaid", and was her "olifant" a horn for oil? This would account for her best frock and her expectant attitude. One would need to ascertain what was the fashion for Flemish bridesmaids of the time.

tion). The windows are of French work if of Flemish design. In the window of the Assumption kneels Marguerite of Austria herself. This window is a blend of designs of Titian and of Dürer. The Susanna window of the south transept is interesting, since the subject was for some reason a favourite at Brou, and was represented in a popular "mystery".

Such is a very brief account of one of the most wonderful of all churches.

CHAPTER XII

THE RHÔNE, THE RHINE, ROUSSILLON, AND SMALLER DISTRICTS

THOSE who visit the lower Rhône valley, and the western and eastern French rivieras, do not as a rule do so in search of southern vintages; but they will hardly help observing that they find them, and these of no mean calibre. Though the vine needs sun, and plenty of it, you do not necessarily get the best wines in the extreme south; the type rather alters, indeed; you find "sherries" and "ports" and "marsalas"; you get, that is, more intensity perhaps, but the vine does not really like any extremes. All the same, you have but to think of the not very widespread vintages of Cassis to realize what the south can do. Or if you lunch at Vence and ask for St-Jeannet (or really, perhaps, La Gande) you will find a local nectar which recompenses you for much "fleecing" by Riviera hotel-keepers. Let us approach our subject, however, in due order.

It is at Châteauneuf-du-Pape, on the left bank of the Rhône, that you meet the first really great Provençal vineyards. The ruined (and burned)

CASSIS

castle is well worth visiting, and one of the finest views of the Rhône is to be had there. Not that this is by any means the first important Rhône vineyard. If you have travelled (as probably you have) through Valence, you will have passed through the vineyard of the Hermitage. Then there is the Côte Rôtie district, which is not far from Lyons, perhaps eighteen miles or so.

If the word " Provence " may be stretched somewhat, it is at Aigues-Mortes, on salty soil, that one finds the admirable Picpol—a white wine, named from its grape, the better for its marshy, salty nurture. Vines are of many kinds. Some like chalk, some schist, some actually thrive when repeatedly flooded, some grow luscious on salty, sandy soil. These latter are phylloxera-proof, and that is a strong point for them. You must move a long way east before picking up again a serious vine-country. On the slopes of the Alpilles, near St-Rémy, are grown here and there vines, here and there olives.

There are other good wines besides the great Rhône vintages. At Tournon, on the Rhône, is St-Péray, a first-class sparkling wine. Tavel is a good pink wine, which you will find in the neighbourhood of Avignon. At Aix-en-Provence one asks for the *vin cuit de Palette*. *Vin cuit* is wine that has gone through a partial boiling, whence results a dessert wine of much delectability. Nîmes [1]

[1] These and other Provence places have been described in my *A Wayfarer in Provence*.

and Uzès have good wines—Nîmes excels (in my humble opinion) in whites. Should you be making a Mistral pilgrimage, you will go to Maillane, the poet's birthplace and residence, and that means lunching at Graveson, made famous by Daudet, since it was the *curé* of Graveson who told the story of the Elixir of Père Gaucher ; it is, however, famous also for Férigoulet (a wine flavoured with local herbs,[1] which you must make every effort to obtain there ; it may be difficult).

Here is an interesting account of the gathering in of the harvests in Languedoc :

On this Sunday in August the carts were coming down from the Cévennes. A fiery sun was scorching the ground. On approaching the town, the white road wound gently downward. Here and there, by the river-side and on the hills, were manor-houses, tiny woods, neat, pretty gardens, and rich farms where the dogs barked.

The carts, filled with people, came down through the dust with a boat-like rolling : in groups of five or six they mustered a village of the poor district, holding only the sturdy people, men, women, and thick-set dark lads, their eyes hidden under their felt hats. All this crowd, setting out in the night, had progressed towards dawn, towards the sun which must be so beautiful near the sea in this corner of Languedoc where the crops are sometimes worth fabulous sums. Sleep and weariness were overcoming even the men. But

[1] If I am right, it is flavoured with Farigoulette, a herb of the thyme variety, which is one of the many botanical specialities of La Sainte Baume, the great Pilgrimage centre.

daybreak and the appearance of more and more wealthy vineyards made them open their eyes. Their hands gripping the rails, shaken by the jolting caused by the ruts, they raised their heads, satiating heart and eyes with this verdure which was going to shine during three months as a " paying " holiday for them.

Already the greater part had come to Pézenas. Those who were best able to speak, explained the scenery. The road runs treeless, open to the sun, with its dust of the thickness of cinders. The plain opens, little by little, into the gleaming undulations of the vines, embellished at long intervals by grey olive-trees. Scattered villages, hamlets, nestle there, white as the linen which dries in the sun on the gravel. Then there is the river which comes from the mountains, under dark shady trees and brushwood; next the Hérault, which you glimpse over there, with its old trees strung out ribbon-wise, on the far side of the town, in the middle of the fields, which it fertilizes several times a year with its flood-waters.[1]

But it is at Cassis that one first meets a really first-class dry wine. Cassis is worth visiting for its own sake; its only crime is cement dust; and after all, with such a wine at command. . . . Not only a pretty little place in itself, it is a remarkable neighbourhood for walks, especially the coast walks, which take you to the Calanques or to La Ciotat. Cassis has been made a home of legend by Mistral, since his *Calendal*, though not wholly finding its scene at Cassis, does find there its hero. It is the right sort of place for a fisherman-hero,

[1] Georges Beaume, *Les Vendanges*.

though the fishing is not now so much in evidence.

The Calanques are little, or indeed large, fiords, very picturesque even when quarried. Port-Pin is my favourite calanque in these parts, but I want to see it, as I have not yet seen it, in a howling Mediterranean southerly. The cliffs of these fiords are magnificent, and their tops are crowned with trees. As they dominate the heights, so does the neighbour-wine of Cassis dominate the littoral for a long way west and east. There are vines all the way, and pleasant vintages.

At La Croix-de-Cavalaire is a large vineyard whose produce is unknown to me; though I can speak very favourably of a private vintage at the neighbouring Cavalière. As the vine space has to be wrested from woods and mimosas the local produce gets rapidly absorbed by the tourists. There is an excellent local brand at La Turbie which seems able to withstand the demands of visitors; and I have already mentioned St-Jeannet, near Vence, which is a wine perhaps little known and therefore little demanded. It is a good thing that the bulk of tourists on this coast are of the kind which know only some half-dozen names from the more obvious lists. Those who have the good sense to demand the local types can generally therefore get them. At Cogolin, which can be reached from La Foux, is an admirable white wine from the hill-side, probably the slopes of Le Moulin.

The *chêne-liège* claims a great deal of space along this coast, and with it the olives. Visitors at Cannes will no doubt go over to the islands ; on St-Honorat they will find a veritable nectar, grown on the island—I was assured that it did not even cross to the mainland. I think of building a small villa there. It is worth living there for the Aleppo pines alone.

On the mainland it is at Cagnes that one finds the next growth of good wines, and on the mountains behind. Round Grasse flowers and even herbs are more precious than vines or olives.

Then there are capital local wines at St-Tropez, and good, if not so good, at Ste-Maxime, places which need no description : in the Alpes Maritimes there is a little patch of excellent wines at La-Colle-sur-Loup. On the New or Western Riviera, Sanary (peaceful spot, if the jazz-bands have not found it out), St-Cyr, and Les Sablettes, close to Toulon, have good wines of their own.

Nice manages to wedge in among its olives, oranges, flowers, some notable vineyards ; ask there for Bellet ; or go thither up the Var valley. At Les Moulins you will find a pleasant group of vineyards, their produce I do not know. Along all the valleys, Var, Tinée, Vésubie, are vineyards ; whether any have slid away in the Vésubie valley recently I cannot say.

But the wayfarer along the Blue Coast must be

wise and not call only for *tchimpègne* and the vintages of Burgundy and Bordeaux. Every here and there he will find the local brands (which appear in no wine list, or only in that of the local hotel) very excellent indeed; and where they are not there is always Cassis to fall back upon! And as they get farther east there are the wines of Italy too, to make them a little variety.

The French Rhine vineyards are, for the most part, not on the Rhine itself, but on the slope which falls towards the Rhine valley. Strasbourg is the Bordeaux or Beaune of this district—a city not only most charming and attractive in itself, for its cathedral (and its clock) and for its excellent old houses, chiefly by the river, but also fascinating from its history. Its old towers, its bridges, its Palace of the Cardinals, its *pâté de foie gras*, its storks, make Strasbourg one of the most fascinating of all French cities. From thence the vineyard centres can easily be visited; Ste-Odile, with its hospitable convent, enjoying a magnificent view, and itself a very fine excursion centre; Barr, at the foot of Mt-Ste-Odile, a busy town, close to the Hohwald, with a fifteenth-century town hall and several ruined castles round about; Riquewihr, on the edge of the Vosges, still a medieval town (artists will make for the Rue des Juifs); Obernai, with its Riesling and its Ottrott (red), in its wide valley, with vineyards and pine-forests closing it

L'HÔTEL DU CORBEAU, STRASBOURG

in; with its old fortifications, of the thirteenth century; its house of Ste Odile, where she was born; its ancient well; its Cour Woelflé; its clock tower and old balconied houses; its castles (Ottrott, Kagenfels, Birkenfels, and others), and much else of interest and beauty. There is Andlau, in Bas-Rhin, with an ancient church (partly of the ninth century) and ruins of its castle; there is St-Hippolyte, in Haut-Rhin, near Ribeauvillé, an ancient city, itself with vineyards; and there is Ammerschwihr; and a great many other smaller vintage centres worth the exploring. Near Mulhouse is the Rebberg vineyard; and most of these centres produce various liqueurs and *eaux-de-vie* also.

The Jura has some good vintages. Salins-les-Bains has reds and whites, still and sparkling. Its situation, below Mt-Poupel, is entrancing; it has old houses showing Spanish influence (since the Spaniards held the Jura at one time), and other interesting buildings, to say nothing of its salt-mines, which can be visited. Dôle is a good centre; both in itself most interesting, with cathedral, fine old houses, the house where Pasteur was born, and the Pasteur museum, and in the neighbourhood various prehistoric remains; and also a centre of the local vintages, Champrans, Menotey, Jouhé. Poligny, a capital excursion centre, is known for its amber or yellow wines. Arbois, also with memories of Pasteur, has white, amber, and red wines.

Savoie will not do much for the haunter of vineyards; but Le Salève (Haute Savoie) has good wines, and Chambéry does its best with vermouth. Savoie will, however, compensate with trout, and game, and honey.

The development of wine-growing on the Upper Moselle was checked by the phylloxera, and replanting was made difficult by the slope of the hills, which called for hand-labour, growing daily more expensive. Slopes are now overgrown with bushes and trees, where once the vine grew; and there does not seem much likelihood of the industry being restarted, in spite of the ease of transport by the canal which runs at the foot of the slopes.

Vineyards are, however, still to be found in the neighbourhood of Bayon, and, farther downstream, towards and about Toul, where a *vin gris* is produced, of which, I regret to say, I have not a very high opinion. Farther down on the Moselle are vineyards again; and sparkling wines are produced on the French portion of the river, no doubt by blends of different vineyards.

At Nancy I found the following wines listed: Arbois, Pagny, Thiaucourt, Lucey, Bruley (*gris* and *rouge*). Of these Bruley and Lucey are in the Côte de Toul; Pagny, or what is left of it, is between Nancy and Metz; and Thiaucourt, just off the Moselle, west of Pagny.

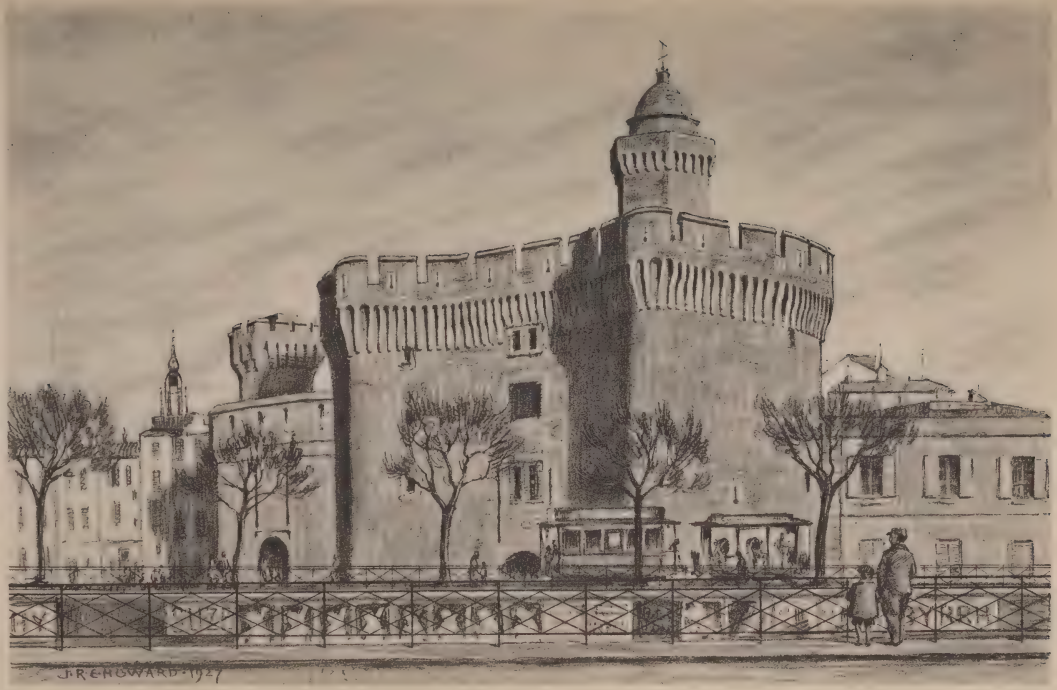
The Lower Pyrenees have a wine of good reputation, Irrouléguy, to be had at St-Jean-Pied-de-Port, that pleasing old town guarding one of the chief passes. Other Béarn and Basque wines besides Moneins are Jurançon and Vicq Binl, of which the latter is pleasing by its title and the former by its history, for the infant Henry of Navarre is reported to have been dosed with it at the earliest possible moment by his enthusiastic grandfather. Far eastwards, in Aude, are good wines, as at Narbonne; and in Hérault, at Montpellier. How charming, somehow, these names of French departments sound! Hérault, rather obviously, makes us think of fanfares, processions, colour, sunshine, a rejoicing people. How dull our county names are! Mostly folk or city names; even those we desecrate into Cambs, or Lincs, or Worcs. Who could feel anything but dingy in Kincardineshire? Or anything but irritated in Fifeshire? Or anything but hard and cold in Flint! We have nothing helpful, save perhaps Merioneth. But France! Savoie alone means jingling tunes, possible monkeys, gaiters, gay blouses, chamois, and, generally, *Excelsior*. Only Drôme perhaps, and certainly Nord, chills us. In Hérault, then, besides Montpellier, the first English colony in the "Riviera" (as it then was), there is Pézenas, which makes a good *eau-de-vie* and also has good wines; a fine old place with many good medieval and Renaissance relics. It is interesting as the birthplace of Georges

Beaume, whose novel *Les Vendanges*, from which I quote above, reflects Pézenas and its neighbourhood, as does his other novel, *Les Deux Visages*. Pézenas is noted for a performance by Molière, during his provincial tour, in 1653, before none other than the Prince of Conti, of the house that is ever associated with the priceless vineyard of Romanée in Burgundy.

Aude and Hérault produce between them a great deal of wine ; but not a great deal of distinguished wine—most are good *ordinaires*. At Balarne is a good Muscat.

In Aveyron, north-west from Hérault, are good wines at Rodez (Entraygues, Marcillac). Aude has, of course, its famous Blanquette de Limoux. At Carcassonne, at Auter's famous restaurant, you should ask for Minervois and Corbières. At Fronton, north-west of Carcassonne, the Haut-Garonne wines begin with Fronton and Villaudrie. Rather lonely, but most deserving *crus*, are also to be found on the Loue valley (Doubs) at Peycharmant and Mercœur (Corrèze).

As you get near Spain, on the east side, you get a heavier and headier type of wine in the Roussillon district. Most are dessert wines, but there are lighter ones, too. It is wise always to inquire the percentage (of alcohol) before imbibing there ; they are of about 18°, which is quite enough. Your centre of the Roussillon will be Perpignan, with the



LE CASTILLET, PERPIGNAN

remains of the castle of Roussillon, or Castel Rossello, alongside of whose hill Hannibal must have passed. All around are vines, sheltered from the cruel *tramontane*, which is the one blot upon Roussillon, by walls, and lying where possible in the valleys; but they bravely climb the slopes also, and you can see in the distance the vine-ploughs, drawn always by horses (which have a way of being white), since the ox does not suit the Roussillonais.

Perpignan, if it has lost many of its former glories, to make room for the "march of mind" and the flood of its modern traffic, is very charming, and as full of history as any town in southern France. Its Castillet, remnant of the fortifications, remains; there is a remarkable cathedral, with an old church, and a very ancient chapel, attached. North of Roussillon is Rivesaltes, a famous Grenache and Muscat centre, though not a peculiarly interesting town. Salses is another great wine centre; its wine is Macabeu, which is also found (but not now in large quantities) at Estagel, which is also the original home, in France, of Malvoisie or Malmsey, originally a Canary or Madeira wine.

But the most charming Roussillon centre is perhaps Banyuls, before which you reach, and should certainly stop at, the beautiful little Collioure, where you should demand *rancio*, and the busy Port Vendres, whose private vintage comes from

Corprons, near by. Banyuls has, alas! been found out by the char-à-bancs, and that is the end of it as far as I am concerned; but one may lunch in peace at the Hôtel "Canal", where the *véritable vin de Banyuls* can be had on request.

If you return to Perpignan you should stop and see the most beautiful cloister in France (save, perhaps, St-Trophime's at Arles), at Elne. The cathedral is rather quaint than impressive, but one gets most beautiful views of it; and if you lunch at Elne at the Hôtel Batlle, you can enjoy a wonderful view of the cathedral while you lunch.

There are lesser vineyard centres all about, whether on the *Côte vermeille*, or in the delightful valleys of Têt and Tech and many others. One of the most pleasant of the local wines (but be wary—it is not altogether a light one) is at the Abbey of St-Michel-de-Cuxa, if you get permission to lunch (your own lunch) in the guest-room.

This time my wanderings took me, after a last linger in Champagne, back along the upper line through Mézières to Dunquerque, and there I was tumbled into a ship, one of whose attractions was that in the morning you got real coffee, and not the mysterious stuff out of a bottle which is the sure sign of the British flag above you. In the morning I woke to find that we were in the Thames

among a little school of delightful Thames sailing-barges. My happiness at the sight was tempered by learning soon after that one, missing stays, was lost. I would wish that a part of our rising generation might take the warning.

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